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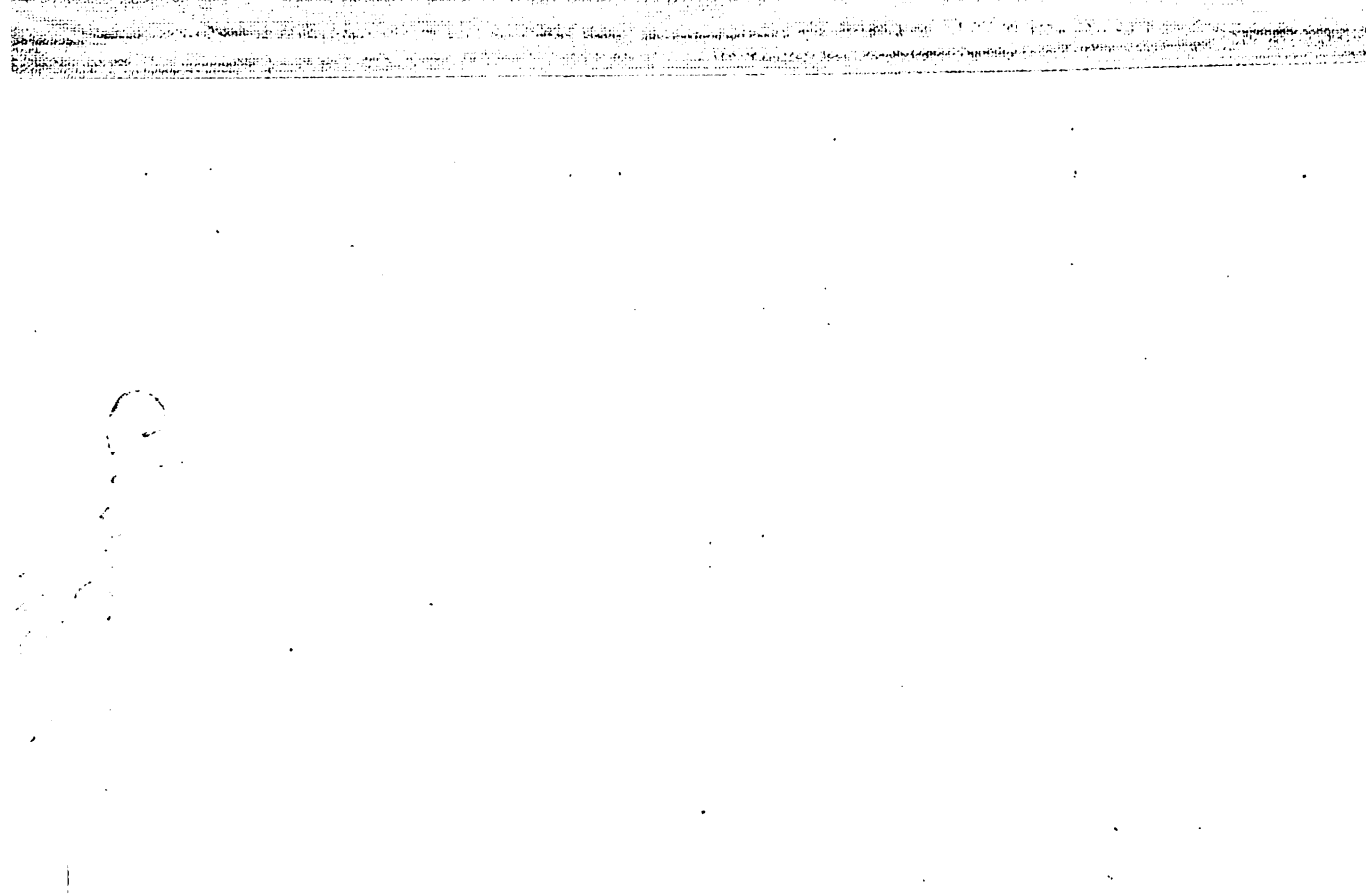

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WILLIAM JAMES

MEMORIES AND MILESTONES

BY

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PREFACE

Life is a unity in spite of the lightning changes of scene that flash across its vistas, and shock us with an awe inspiring sense of dislocation. Behind all there is a steady, moving power; and the scenes are related. The whole of any life,— the whole of any epoch,— is past and gone in a moment; and, behold, it then appears to be stamped all over with a kind of identity: it is unmistakably one thing. But we cannot peep behind this curtain of the future and find out what all our present thoughts signify. Therefore anyone who publishes portraits and memories, or who reprints little addresses upon current history, will do well to refrain from any parade of philosophy in a preface. One of the deepest impulses in man is the impulse to record,— to scratch a drawing on a tusk or keep a diary, to collect sagas and heap cairns. This instinct as to the enduring value of the past is, one might say, the very basis of civilization. It is a good sign then when young men

keep journals and old gentlemen take to publishing reminiscences. It helps the general atmosphere of thought and enriches everyone a little. A belief in this kind of literary conservation must be my excuse for publishing the ensuing volume.

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MEMORIES AND MILESTONES

ART AND ART SCHOOLS

Address delivered at New Haven on the Forty-eighth Anniversary of the Yale School of Fine Arts, June 8, 1914.

MEMORIES AND MILESTONES

I

ART AND ART SCHOOLS

THE Nineteenth Century has prided itself on its critical philosophies. To understand past history has been the peculiar mission of that century. It expounded Greek and medieval religion; it elaborated theories; it put everything into books. The things it chiefly valued were its own valuations of the past. The investigator became the Coryphæus of the age, and anyone who could propound a new and brilliant critical theory was thought a prophet. The intellectual leaders of other ages have been artists and saints, but in the nineteenth century the leaders of thought have been professors.

We are familiar with this condition of things; we are accustomed to the bondage of doctrine, and we almost forget that the natural language of humanity is art, and

that every literature of criticism turns very rapidly with the revolving suns into a literature of old opinion. There is not room in the world's ever-active and seething brain for old opinions; and we may therefore expect that the thought of the nineteenth century will show as a blank in history. Ideas endure only when they are so stated that they carry a new message to each generation; and they do this only when their message is clad in the form of art.

When the men of the Renaissance wrote their commentary upon Greek art, they wrote it in marble. That is why we read it to-day. When Walter Scott and Victor Hugo issued treatises upon the past they expressed themselves in forms of living, self-sustaining literature. The artist speaks always from the present.

There is a great illusion,—it is the illusion of the nineteenth century,—namely, that a book endures, and that everything must therefore be packed into books. We have wished to record everything in prose. Painting, poetry, religion, history; passion, thought, myth, humor;—our foolish age has believed that it was writing all these things up into linear and enduring prose. Never before was there an epoch stupid

enough to set out upon such an undertaking. The eighteenth century, for all its encyclopædias, put the arts first, and kept Academies only as convenient depositories for philosophic apparatus. The Academy furnished a house for the telescope, a catalogue for the picture gallery. But Art still ruled in the imagination of the times. As a consequence of this, all eighteenth-century art is interesting. But a large part of the art of the nineteenth century lacks resonance and is equivocal, because it has been made by men whose belief in their own vehicle was on the wane. Half their brain has lived in contemporary philosophy, namely in that atmosphere of nineteenth-century thought which puts the critic above the artist, and crows like a cock over the remains of the Parthenon. It was criticism that killed art during the nineteenth century. Goethe felt this coming on when he said that he never could have written his early works if, at the time he wrote them, there had existed such an atmosphere of carping criticism as reigned in Germany during his later years. The worship of the work of non-creative minds,— the general public belief that great things were being found out, and that hard work was cultiva-

tion, has led men to forget that at the bottom of the world's interest in all of the fine arts lie mysteries which are the source of their power. We are united to the past by mysteries, which a critical zeal tends to destroy. The critics of painting have palsied their own relation to art by their conscientious work over it. The great illusion that man can seize and hold the truth is what has injured art in the nineteenth century. This thought makes the vision of the painter rigid, turns the poet into a preacher, and sets the playwright and novelist to work at social problems. It makes the intellectual life a treadmill.

The nineteenth century was an era that had to be passed through. It rescued from oblivion the innumerable neglected masterpieces of other ages, and it has left the museums, and the critical Journals in its wake. But it has also fastened certain bad habits of thought upon the world.

Oh, let us never say anything critical again, never analyze a picture, or a play, never say something intelligent about an epoch of the past. For this pettifogging, ignorant nosing over the fine arts is what has all but extinguished them in west-Europe. It is noticeable that each of us

has the disease most acutely in regard to some art with which he is least familiar. I observe, for instance, that if I read a book, I may perhaps say little about it, because I am bookish. But if I go to a gallery of recent paintings,— entering thus into a field of which I am perfectly ignorant (I could not draw the portrait of a cat or model a potato), why a whole ready-made avalanche of clever criticism pours from me upon the canvases. This is the destruction of art, this talking about it by people who do not practice it.

Let our opinions on art be written in paint, and our theories of poetry exhibited in poems having the flesh and body of poetic life. No other criticisms will stand, except those which are done into living art, and are thus, as it were, a part of life itself.

As crystals form of themselves in a chemical mixture when the temperature permits, so talent appears in the world. No one knows what the conditions are that generate talent. Art is a mystery, and springs up out of the shadows, like a mushroom. An artist is a man who has had the good fortune to receive sufficient instruction at one time, and to be sufficiently left to him-

self at another. Severe training and utter neglect,— he must have had both. Depth of feeling, accuracy of intellect, experience in the vehicle,— all these things go together, and there is no royal road to them. And behind them there is the force that somehow works its will and releases a new personality into the world. So far as intelligence can discern, a general popular interest in some form of art precedes the rise of artists. The child of promise must be born near to some master who can teach him the rudiments. A village priest teaches him the beginnings of harmony, and the nearest man of means pays for sending him to the conservatory. There must exist a social conspiracy of assistance, which awaits his coming. Some amateurs have, perhaps, become interested in reviving mural decoration or church music, and have set up a school which catches the young tadpoles of genius in a net and finds a pond for them.

Let me give an instance. A church in our village found itself in need of an organist. A boy of twenty musically gifted offered himself for employment. The problem was how to fit him for the position. He was about to take correspondence lessons in harmony from a teacher whose adver-

tisement he had seen in a magazine, when it was discovered that Trinity Church in New York had recently founded a school for organists, where counterpoint was taught, and every classic tradition of church music was preserved. The boy is now earning his living as assistant choir master in a New York church, while he takes the course at the Trinity School which will make him a competent organist. Ten years ago this could not have been done. Our community had not advanced far enough to recognize, save, and protect the early shoots of musical talent.

A good teacher is like a jailer, with this difference, that his aim is, not to keep persons in, but to let them out of prison. The students are constantly fastening the bolts and pulling down the shutters upon themselves, while the master endeavors to show them how to avoid doing so. His task is a religious one and is as difficult as theology. For he must remain untrammeled while dealing in dogmas. It is all personal work. There is no art in the abstract.

The problem of society is to let the newly forming crystals of talent come easily into contact with each other. This was done through the studio of the master down to

Louis XIV's time, when the state began to take charge of everything. It would not be surprising if humanity should return to the old studio system in case a new age of art should come in. The institutional system may be found too clumsy a teacher to deal with the higher branches of art. But on the other hand, personal genius is so inwoven with all advance in the fine arts that we cannot dogmatize about ways and means. We know that in the life of the artist poverty, obscurity, and loneliness are often not disadvantages but advantages; and early wealth, a conventional education, and solicitous parents are often not advantages, but disadvantages, which only time and peculiar force can overcome.

In the United States we have been wading our way towards the higher learning through the higher buildings. If you heard of a singing school in Pittsburg it meant a half-million dollars' worth of bricks and mortar. When the New York Amateurs of the Drama founded a National School of Acting, they sank two millions of dollars in an auditorium,— and sold it the next year because the age had provided neither plays, audiences, nor actors. What these gentlemen truly needed was a few good

teachers and a hired room, with no publicity.

O keep this Yale School of Art a secret. Let the great public first become aware of its existence by finding a man who can paint, and asking him, Where did you learn?

During the last fifteen years education has made great strides in America. We have made great strides in humility. We have come to see that our education is rudimentary and imperfect, that time is required in order that our standards may be raised. As our familiarity with intellect increases we shall unconsciously and inevitably subserve its laws. As our unconscious familiarity with the ways of intellect increases, a general consent will be reached without discussion as to many matters which we now regard as problems and paradoxes. During the next fifty years we shall discover that the best thing we can do for the average mind is to give exceptional advantages to the exceptional mind. There is a law of nature at the back of this theory,—the law, namely, which Christ referred to in saying that to him that hath shall be given. In America our philosophy of education has often kicked against this

law, pretending that in America we had found something better. But in the end we shall conform to the law because it is the truth.

I do not desire to become dogmatic in dealing with so mystical a question as this question of teaching. The truth floats and beckons; we must be content with half-light and intimations. Education always hovers between two tendencies: the tendency to teach to every pupil a little of something, and the tendency to provide great and rare opportunities for great and rare talents. Primary education is governed by the first tendency, the higher education by the second. In America our higher education seems to have been too much colored by ways of feeling proper to the elementary school.

The higher branches of learning are slow in their effect upon the community. They imply time. If you assist a single first-rate mind to develop fully, that mind will do more for the next age than ten thousand second-rate talents, each of which you should assist a little. That mind can be counted on to educate and inspire its own contemporaries. Thus, in a generation you will have reached everyone. We must be

willing to operate down the stream of time. We cannot hope to color all the water of the river as it flows by us; but we can cast something into the stream which will color it down below.

At Yale you are engaged in working. Your School is one among many of those little groups of sincere men who are forming centers of thought, centers of music, centers of painting in America. These groups already qualify the age. Our whole conception of America is affected by the mere thought of them. There is, for instance, a music school in New York City which is working away unostentatiously and with the modesty of a European school. It might be in Belgium or in Germany. We all have a relation to these groups of craftsmen. They educate us into a respect for the artist. They thus weave us into fabric of the whole coördinate mind of humanity. It is only through such men that our country will ultimately come into a true relation with European art and music; for until we have art and music of our own our relation to the arts of Europe must be false and flimsy. The aid which you or I,—I mean the amateurs,—can offer to these groups of men is invisible and yet enormous.

It is the assistance which we give to men when we honor them.

It would seem as if America's great need of social cohesion had, for a century, absorbed the energies of our own people, so that we can only think in communal terms. All ideas must be justified by an appeal to public spirit: they must be passed by the censor. In America our path towards Art lies through Benevolence. The country now heaves and glows with benevolence and with social movements. If you hold up any one of these movements and search it for intellect you will find very little. You will find crude ideas, defective education, apparent shallowness and a lack of intellectual rigor. And yet all this haze of benevolence is the bed and cradle of intellect, the soil in which intellect will spring up later. Peter Cooper and his wife had no knowledge of the arts and crafts, but only a firm faith in the reality of them, and a hovering love for the young people to whom they hoped to throw open new avenues of life. And yet to-day the Cooper Union is one of the best schools of craftsmanship in America, a place worthy to be visited by the experts of the old world.

There is some great law of progress at the back of our present devotion to moral

causes. Our causes, it may be observed, are themselves becoming more abstract in nature. They are no longer Anti-slavery, Civil Service Reform, Ballot Reform, Temperance (though I confess that Woman's Rights still continues). Our present causes are merging into a desire for social service and for the moral and physical improvement of everyone. The reformer of today wants to uplift other people and make them better. He often rushes out to do this before he knows what he would do. At first sight this condition of things would seem to give no scope for the pursuit of truth for its own sake. It would seem that we seek truth in order that we may use it for somebody's benefit. That subtler, deeper, stronger, more pervading and enduring influence which the artist has upon the world merely from the fact of his existence is all but unknown to our current philosophy. Yet it is this very truth which we are destined to discover in our progress through benevolence toward intellect.

Our ideas of utility are crude, and much that older countries take for granted we must come upon and learn freshly for ourselves. The great artist is the most educative influence upon the globe. But he

must not and he will not care for educating or for uplifting other people. He cares for truth, and leaves that to do the work. So of the lesser artists, I am in sympathy with them when they neglect the current philosophies of benevolence and stick to their crafts. I verily believe that the atmosphere of benevolence in America will not be diminished but increased as the world of intellect appears above the face of the waters. I verily believe that the artists among us will come to be considered, as artists have ever been considered elsewhere, as the advance guards of Civilization.

WILLIAM JAMES

II

WILLIAM JAMES

NONE of us will ever see a man like William James again: there is no doubt about that. And yet it is hard to state what it was in him that gave him either his charm or his power, what it was that penetrated and influenced us, what it is that we lack and feel the need of, now that he has so unexpectedly and incredibly died. I always thought that William James would continue forever; and I relied upon his sanctity as if it were sunlight.

I should not have been abashed at being discovered in some mean action by William James; because I should have felt that he would understand and make allowances. The abstract and sublime quality of his nature was always enough for two; and I confess to having always trespassed upon him and treated him with impertinence, without gloves, without reserve, without ordinary, decent concern for the sentiments

and weaknesses of human character. Knowing nothing about philosophy, and having the dimmest notions as to what James's books might contain, I used occasionally to write and speak to him about his specialties in a tone of fierce contempt; and never failed to elicit from him in reply the most spontaneous and celestial gayety. Certainly he was a wonderful man.

He was so devoid of selfish aim or small personal feeling that your shafts might pierce, but could never wound him. You could not "diminish one dowle that's in his plume." Where he walked, nothing could touch him; and he enjoyed the Emersonian immunity of remaining triumphant even after he had been vanquished. The reason was, as it seems to me, that what the man really meant was always something indestructible and persistent; and that he knew this inwardly. He had not the gift of expression, but rather the gift of suggestion. He said things which meant one thing to him and something else to the reader or listener. His mind was never quite in focus, and there was always something left over after each discharge of the battery, something which now became the beginning of a new thought. When he found out his

mistake or defect of expression, when he came to see that he had not said quite what he meant, he was the first to proclaim it, and to move on to a new position, a new misstatement of the same truth,— a new, debonair apperception, clothed in non-conclusive and suggestive figures of speech.

How many men have put their shoulders out of joint in striking at the phantasms which James projected upon the air! James was always in the right, because what he meant was true. The only article of his which I ever read with proper attention was "The Will to Believe," a thing that exasperated me greatly until I began to see, or to think I saw, what James meant, and at the same time to acknowledge to myself that he had said something quite different. I hazard this idea about James as one might hazard an idea about astronomy, fully aware that it may be very foolish.

In private life and conversation there was the same radiation of thought about him. The center and focus of his thought fell within his nature, but not within his intellect. You were thus played upon by a logic which was not the logic of intellect, but a far deeper thing, limpid and clear in itself, confused and refractory only when

you tried to deal with it intellectually. You must take any fragment of such a man by itself, for his whole meaning is in the fragment. If you try to piece the bits together, you will endanger their meaning. In general talk on life, literature, and politics James was always throwing off sparks that were cognate only in this, that they came from the same central fire in him. It was easy to differ from him; it was easy to go home thinking that James had talked the most arrant rubbish, and that no educated man had a right to be so ignorant of the first principles of thought and of the foundations of human society. Yet it was impossible not to be morally elevated by the smallest contact with William James. A refining, purgatorial influence came out of him.

I believe that in his youth, James dedicated himself to the glory of God and the advancement of Truth, in the same spirit that a young knight goes to seek the Grail, or a young military hero dreams of laying down his life for his country. What his early leanings towards philosophy or his natural talent for it may have been, I do not know; but I feel as if he had first taken up philosophy out of a sense of duty,—

the old Puritanical impulse,— in his case illumined, however, with a humor and genius not at all of the Puritan type. He adopted philosophy as his lance and buckler,— psychology, it was called in his day, — and it proved to be as good as the next thing,— as pliable as poetry or fiction or politics or law would have been,— or anything else that he might have adopted as a vehicle through which his nature could work upon society.

He, himself, was all perfected from the beginning, a selfless angel. It is this quality of angelic unselfishness which gives the power to his work. There may be some branches of human study — mechanics perhaps — where the personal spirit of the investigator does not affect the result; but philosophy is not one of them. Philosophy is a personal vehicle; and every man makes his own, and through it he says what he has to say. It is all personal: it is all human: it is all non-reducible to science, and incapable of being either repeated or continued by another man.

Now James was an illuminating ray, a dissolvent force. He looked freshly at life, and read books freshly. What he had to say about them was not entirely articulated,

but was always spontaneous. He seemed to me to have too high an opinion of everything. The last book he had read was always "a great book"; the last person he had talked with, a wonderful being. If I may judge from my own standpoint, I should say that James saw too much good in everything, and felt towards everything a too indiscriminating approval. He was always classing things up into places they didn't belong and couldn't remain in.

Of course, we know that Criticism is proverbially an odious thing; it seems to deal only in shadows,— it acknowledges only varying shades of badness in everything. And we know, too, that Truth is light; Truth cannot be expressed in shadow, except by some subtle art which proclaims the shadow-part to be the lie, and the non-expressed part to be the truth. And it is easy to look upon the whole realm of Criticism and see in it nothing but a science which concerns itself with the accurate statement of lies. Such, in effect, it is in the hands of most of its adepts. Now James's weakness as a critic was somehow connected with the peculiar nature of his mind, which lived in a consciousness of light. The fact is that James was non-crit-

ical, and therefore divine. He was forever hovering, and never could alight; and this is a quality of truth and a quality of genius.

The great religious impulse at the back of all his work, and which pierces through at every point, never became expressed in conclusive literary form, or in dogmatic utterance. It never became formulated in his own mind into a stateable belief. And yet it controlled his whole life and mind, and accomplished a great work in the world. The spirit of a priest was in him,— in his books and in his private conversation. He was a sage, and a holy man; and everybody put off his shoes before him. And yet in spite of this,— in conjunction with this, he was a sportive, wayward, Gothic sort of spirit, who was apt, on meeting a friend, to burst into foolery, and whose wit was always three parts poetry. Indeed his humor was as penetrating as his seriousness. Both of these two sides of James's nature — the side that made a direct religious appeal, and the side that made a veiled religious appeal — became rapidly intensified during his latter years; so that, had the process continued much longer, the mere sight of him must have moved beholders to amend their lives.

I happened to be at Oxford at one of his

lectures in 1908; and it was remarkable to see the reverence which that very un-revering class of men — the University dons — evinced towards James, largely on account of his appearance and personality. The fame of him went abroad, and the Sanhedrim attended. A quite distinguished, and very fussy scholar, a member of the old guard of Nil-admirari Cultivation,— who would have sniffed nervously if he had met Moses — told me that he had gone to a lecture of James's, "though the place was so crowded, and stank so that he had to come away immediately."—"But," he added, "he certainly has the face of a sage."

There was, in spite of his playfulness, a deep sadness about James. You felt that he had just stepped out of this sadness in order to meet you, and was to go back into it the moment you left him. It may be that sadness inheres in some kinds of profoundly religious characters,—in dedicated persons who have renounced all, and are constantly hoping, thinking, acting, and (in the typical case) praying for humanity. Lincoln was sad, and Tolstoi was sad, and many sensitive people, who view the world as it is, and desire nothing for themselves except to become of use to others, and to become

agents in the spread of truth and happiness, — such people are often sad. It has sometimes crossed my mind that James wanted to be a poet and an artist, and that there lay in him, beneath the ocean of metaphysics, a lost Atlantis of the fine arts; that he really hated philosophy and all its works, and pursued them only as Hercules might spin, or as a prince in a fairy tale might sort seeds for an evil dragon, or as anyone might patiently do some careful work for which he had no aptitude. It would seem most natural, if this were the case between James and the metaphysical sciences; for what is there in these studies that can drench and satisfy a tingling mercurial being who loves to live on the surface, as well as in the depths of life? Thus we reason, forgetting that the mysteries of temperament are deeper than the mysteries of occupation. If James had had the career of Molière, he would still have been sad. He was a victim of divine visitation: the Searching Spirit would have winnowed him in the same manner, no matter what avocation he might have followed.

The world watched James as he pursued through life his search for religious truth; the world watched him, and often

gently laughed at him, asking, "When will James arise and fly? When will 'he take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea'?" And in the meantime, James was there already. Those were the very places that he was living in. Through all the difficulties of polyglot metaphysics and of modern psychology he waded for years, lecturing and writing and existing,— and creating for himself a public which came to see in him only the saint and the sage, which felt only the religious truth which James was in search of, yet could never quite grasp in his hand. This very truth constantly shone out through him,— shone, as it were, straight through his waistcoat,— and distributed itself to everyone in the drawing-room, or in the lecture-hall where he sat. Here was the familiar paradox, the old parable, the psychological puzzle of the world. "But what went ye out for to see?" In the very moment that the world is deciding that a man was no prophet and had nothing to say, in that very moment perhaps is his work perfected, and he himself is gathered to his fathers, after having been a lamp to his own generation, and an inspiration to those who come after.

SHAW AND THE MODERN DRAMA

III

SHAW AND THE MODERN DRAMA

"FANNY'S FIRST PLAY," by George Bernard Shaw, has the first requisite of a play in that it is very entertaining—"diverting" would be the old-fashioned word. It is a lively, and even boisterous, burlesque, and would be a perfect sample of good burlesque writing if the humor of it were always good humor, and if some sort of ethical purpose were not from time to time rubbed in.

The theme of the play is happy. The hero and heroine are the commonplace offspring of middle-class British tradesmen; their fathers have been partners in business for years, and their betrothal, which has taken place before the play opens, is but a part of the humdrum world in which their lives are to be spent. An interruption to the idyll takes place, owing to the following circumstances: The hero, through a fight with a policeman, has got himself locked up for a fortnight; the heroine, in a fit of high

spirits, has gone alone to a dance-hall, and has there become involved in a "raid" of the place. Thus the heroine has also been incarcerated for the same two weeks as the hero. The discovery of these two escapades throws both families into convulsions of horror; and each of the four parents of the lovers exhibits a different and amusing variety of wounded conservatism.

The nature of the hero's escapade has not been innocent, and it brings into the play a young woman of the streets in whose company he has been arrested. The heroine's escapade *has* been innocent, but brings into the play a Frenchman in whose company she has been arrested and whose appearance gives rise to infinite equivocation and innuendo. Both Frenchman and street lady are as entertaining as they can be, and every part in the play, as it is given at the Comedy Theater, New York, is played to perfection — including the one remaining character of a young butler, who turns out in the end to be the brother of a duke. This butler, by the way, is finally married off to the heroine — after not quite sufficient preparation of the audience for such a *dénoûment.*

Nothing could be more admirable than

this plot as a skeleton for a burlesque. It is obvious, conventional, symmetrical, and just new enough to awaken in any audience agreeable anticipations. I forgot to mention that before the curtain goes up, and after it comes down, there are some gentlemen who appear on the stage and discuss the merits of the play,— one being dressed in fancy costume and intended to represent the traditional artistic feeling of Europe in the eighteenth century, and the others being types of the British dramatic critic of the present day. To my mind this prologue and epilogue were not successful, because they were not clever enough. Something dragged, and one wished the talkers would stop. But the dramatic idea of this prologue and epilogue was admirable. The play itself is interesting from beginning to end and shows well enough that a *conversation play,* with a well-set-up, cast-iron frame behind the characters, is a good kind of play. It holds its own; it pleases. And one may remark incidentally that the Greek drama very often depends on the same arrangement for its success — cast-iron plot behind, character-talking in front.

Shaw is a sincere playwright, and when we consider the fluffy mediocrity of the old

plays, and of the old-style acting which Shaw's drama supplanted, we cannot help being grateful to him. He has revolutionized English acting. He has produced actors who, within their rather narrow limits, are as good as French actors. Shaw is a sincere artist; he writes for himself and to satisfy himself. He has thus rediscovered one of the psychological secrets of art. The way to interest the world is for a man to write for himself. Shaw, as a man, is interested in the contrasts and incongruities of ethical theory which modern (perhaps all) life shows. His mind is satisfied when he has apprehended the irreconcilable conflicts in the world of morality. As an artist he is satisfied when he has successfully presented one or some of these conflicts. He really seeks nothing beyond this in his art; and yet the fact that he came into notice as a social agitator has left its heavy trace on his art: it makes him preach.

Whether it be preaching or poetry, however, Shaw's work has got him the attention of the world. Any group of educated people anywhere will be thrown into excited discussion by almost any bit of Shaw's work. This shows not only that Shaw is a very powerful and remarkable being, but

also that his work bears a peculiar and vital relation to the passing moment. Some people think that Shaw's purpose is to amuse the fools and to bewilder the thinkers. My own belief is that Shaw wants merely to get heard of and to make money. Socialism and play-writing are his rattle. When he was young and poor he agitated it loudly; and now that he is rich and famous he knows how to do nothing else except to work this rattle. You cannot say he is a man without heart: he is the kindliest of men. But he is a man without taste or reverence. He does not know that there are things which cannot be made funny. He is a man in whose composition something is left out. You cannot *blame* him, any more than you can blame the color-blind. He is beauty-blind, and amuses himself with seeing what grotesques he can pick out of the carpet of life.

The objections to Shaw are thus seen to be not dramatic, but personal, and again, in a sense, not personal, but generic and of the age. Shaw's crude and cruel treatment of humanity — all done in the name of Fabianism (whatever that is), the somewhat loathsome touch of the social reformer who has worn off the fine edges of his feelings

by contact with grossness (we find this touch sometimes in a certain type of clergyman), keep sending chills of an unpleasant kind through a sensitive auditor, and chills of a very agreeable kind through the auditor who is deficient in human feeling or deficient in artistic experience. I suppose the fault of Shaw is like the fault of Ibsen. Ibsen is not content unless he has rasped our feelings. Shaw, to be sure, can laugh, and is, to my mind, a thousand times a better man and better artist than Ibsen, who can only scowl. But Shaw has Ibsen's method. It was Ibsen who first found out that the public was callous. Ibsen reasoned thus: "If you want to give emotion to the average playgoer you must take a rusty blade from an old razor, attach it to a brick, and therewith suddenly shave off one of a man's toes. That is art." Shaw has the same rake-and-saw theory. He cannot mention adultery (and it is his chief theme) without seeming to soil the whole of human nature in doing so.

In all this obtuseness Shaw is a child of the age, and his popularity depends upon this very crudity. If Shaw should touch human nature with the loving hand of, say, Molière, or present his characters in the

transparent and pleasing atmosphere of sound-hearted humanity, his peculiar audience to-day would not understand him. He would lose his charm for his public; I say not for all the public (witness the charming plays that succeed), but for *his* public. Whatever Hamlet may have intimated to the contrary, *caviare* is what half the million wants to-day. We must have mustard at every course. We like the butter to be a little rancid, and humor seems flat unless it contains just a little tang of doubt as to the fundamental truth of virtue and honor. Such a public takes the romance out of its theater; and the loss is particularly visible in the romantic rôles — namely, in the young characters.

"Fanny's First Play" contains four admirable middle-aged persons, kindly handled — three of them could not be better. The fourth, the religious woman, is only painful because she is rendered unkindly. Shaw is afraid that we shall not see the point unless he overdraws her a little. Some people tell me that Mrs. Knox is not intended to be a caricature, but a serious portrait of humanity. This amounts to saying that Shaw's harshness comes from the lack of fine perception, not from malice. It

may be so; but Mrs. Knox's portrait remains a caricature. But the young people! The mushy boy; the flat heroine, who "sees life" as it were by accident, and then takes the bit in her teeth and proclaims some sort of half-considered "freedom." She is supposed to be very virtuous, yet her virtue is not agreeable; she is supposed to be innocent, yet somehow she seems corrupt. What is it that these young persons lack? Why, they lack *feeling*. The girl has no gospel: she is a bold-faced jig. She really isn't a character at all, but is like a face drawn with one scratch of chalk, which shows only a single eye and but half an ear. The boy hero is a puppy without sentiments. The butler is perhaps intended to typify wisdom and goodness. One cannot tell. As a butler of comedy he is perfect. Let us leave him at that.

During the performance that I witnessed I observed about fifteen young girls sitting in the row in front of me, who devoured all this medley of twentieth-century confusion with eyes of rapturous interest. They were the graduating class from a fashionable school, and this was part of their "finishing." Their parents in Oshkosh and Patagonia will be delighted when the mail

brings them word that the school is keeping their daughters in touch with European culture. It must be remembered that the most corrupt touch in the play consists in the fact that it is supposed to be written by a young girl. Hence girls flock to see it.

And this recalls to me a strange thing that has been happening for some years past to the young girls in New York City. The dress and carriage of the just-grown-up misses there, I mean of the fashionable ones, is such as to suggest an ambition on their part of seeming to be worse than they are. The expression of their faces — which, by the way, are often painted — is what the older dramatists would have designated as "wanton." And yet a baby freshness and youthful emptiness peeps through the veneer of crime. Surely this class of boarding-school girl is a strange product of contemporary life.

I suspect that, at maturity, some of these girls may be found in the divorce courts, whether as parties or as co-respondents. The row of them that watched "Fanny's First Play" took the play seriously — viz., as a very good joke. And every time a reference to adultery was made by the actors, the girls giggled in a knowing manner. At

one of the wittiest points in the play, where the butler gives a tip to the Frenchman to the effect that the little street lady is what in France is so decently and accurately called a *fille de joie,* my whole row of young ladies burst into uncontrollable gayety, as if they had never heard anything more lively.

Now what did these girls know about the world (so much more than I did), that they laughed at a sally which rather shocked me? How did they ever get so far along in a knowledge of the demi-monde? And were they right in seeing a good picture of life in the crude and blatant immorality of Shaw? The fact is that these girls are not only being corrupted but deceived. Their feather-brained parents and guardians are feeding the creatures to Moloch and Astarte because it is fashionable to be immoral. No doubt there could be found among these very innocents many girls who would like to remain honest women, even in thought, if they had but known such a thing were possible in modern days. It is an interesting and yet awful glimpse into every-day life that we get through the minds of these virgins. The play, the name of the play,

and the presence of the girls — all these elements are symptomatic and inevitable.

During the last thirty years there has been a great demand in Europe for coarse literature, obvious, crude, and bold — fitted for the appreciation of luxurious and materialistic persons, of ignorant persons, of fatigued persons. New wealth joins forces with effete culture in search of sensation. The increasing demand for *piquancy* which such an audience implies, has led to an ever-increasing grossness of conception on the part of the artists. Wherever the relations of the sexes were concerned, this intensification has led, of course, to pictures of female depravity at younger and ever younger ages. It seems as if the limits of indelicacy had now been reached by this school of play-writing (unless childhood is to be attacked), and we may expect an emotional revival.

DR. HORACE HOWARD FURNESS

IV

DR. HORACE HOWARD FURNESS

DR. FURNESS was at the time of his death the most famous of American scholars. The sixteen great volumes of his Variorum Shakespeare are like the Fondaco dei Tedeschi at Venice,— a casket and a monument, a thing of beauty and a symbol of ancient wealth.

In one of his prefaces Dr. Furness says that every textual variant of the volume in question has been thrice verified by himself. These textual variants or alternate readings are the ashes of the various texts that have successively been evolved and destroyed by one and another of Shakespeare's editors since the earliest times; and these ashes are preserved, lest perchance a little scrap of gold should somewhere be left among them, or lest there should lurk in them some gleam of the life of that phœnix that flew forth out of them.

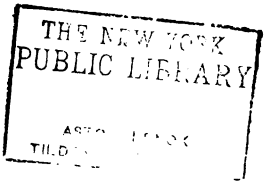
But the labor of endless textual detail is

only one feature of Dr. Furness's work on Shakespeare's monument. The other sides of his work are less dreadful to think of. His aim was to bring the substance of all the books ever written about Shakespeare into the compass of a single edition. Any other man would have attacked his work like a beaver. Dr. Furness attacked it like a bee. His sunny disposition turned the gigantic work into pleasure. And here a strange fact may be perceived — that Dr. Furness ended by weaving his own character and personality into this edition as completely as if he had been writing his memoirs, or making a portrait of himself for posterity. Furness's notes and glossaries abound in that playful tenderness which I feel sure was the characteristic quality of Shakespeare himself. I am certain that an unwillingness to hurt anyone's feelings was the most noticeable quality in Shakespeare, and that this is why Shakespeare was so often called "gentle" by his contemporaries. (Imagine a stage-manager who should be nicknamed "gentle" to-day!)

If, as I just said, Dr. Furness has written himself into these volumes, it is because in dealing with the Shakespeare legends he only takes what he loves, and he only loves

From a photograph by Gutekunst

HORACE HOWARD FURNESS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thyme and sweet-william. If a subject displeases him, he drops it. For instance, he cannot bear to speak ill of such a good Elizabethan as John Payne Collier; and he, therefore, frankly says that no discussion of the Collier forgery question can be looked for from him. This is not what is called scholarship; but it is something better than scholarship, it is character, it is temperament, it is vitality.

No great scholar has ever written such a good commentary on Shakespeare as Dr. Furness has written; because all great scholars are apt to become bores. It is really their duty and their destiny to be bores. Even A. C. Bradley, the latest and greatest of Shakespearian scholars, is just a little, slightly a bore. The note of virtuosity is in him. Dr. Furness was really engaged in arranging, condensing, and transcribing the things that he thought vital in Shakespeare's literary history. He was one kind of a scholar; but he belonged to that type and species of scholarship of which Bishop Percy and Walter Scott are examples, the species to whom literature is food and drink. To some modern scholars, literature is a dead body, or at least a subject for vivisection — never a live animal to be stroked and

talked to, befriended, lived with, laughed and cried over.

Furness's tone about his own views is so modest that he almost seems to have no views of his own; and when he suggests an idea of his own, he barely hazards it, and that in the fewest words. What great scholar ever did the like? Dr. Furness collects all the bones and tidbits from three hundred years of Shakespearian controversy; and having laid them before you, scampers away with a jest. The result is that he has written enchanting commentaries which frame Shakespeare with a genial sort of foolery that is near kin to Shakespeare's own spirit.

This Variorum Edition will cause many old Shakespeariana to go out of print. The positive results of many a great commentator's life may be embodied in an improved text; and the wagon-loads of disquisition which at first were essential, soon become superfluous through their very success. The same reasoning holds good in regard to the theories which course like dolphins in Shakespeare's wake, theories as to the chronology of the plays, theories as to the sources of their plots, and the metaphysics of their characters. A brochure upon any

such topic will in a few years shrink and dry up, till it can be carried in a mere footnote. Indeed, any idea must be quite monumental at the beginning of its career, in order that posterity shall afford it more than an asterisk.

The notes and disquisitions in the Variorum Edition give you all you are ever likely to want of a host of old worthies and worthiesses who strutted their little day, and penned with quill pens and steel pens their various comments. I love the race of men who write notes on great books, whether on Dante or on Shakespeare. They collect miscellaneous information and they chatter like happy magpies. They keep literature alive, like Darwin's earthworms, by creeping down out of sight and bringing new soil to the top. Without them some poets would be incomprehensible within a few decades after death. Dante would be unread today, Chaucer and Shakespeare would be almost gone, and Byron would be on the road to oblivion. To put all the Shakespeare chatterers into one great aviary, to tame them, docket them, assign them their perches and index them — this was the work of Dr. Furness's life. The Variorum is really a Shakespeare library; and no pri-

vate person has need to encumber his shelves with more authorities than this edition supplies. If a man wants to make a beast of himself, let him go to a public library.

My acquaintance with Dr. Furness was slight, or rather, I should say, it was short, and did not occur till 1912, when he was in his seventy-ninth year. But the man himself cast back such a light on his books, and his books now begin to cast forward such a light on the man, that his image is very clear in my mind. It is the image of the perfect scholar, and of the great gentleman, through whom there yet shines a crystal idea of something nobler than either. He was all his life a man of various social activities and of great influence; and this contact with life gave him a robustness and rotundity of nature which literary men often lack.

He certainly was the most picturesque old gentleman that I have ever known. He was short and stout — his head, with its large dome, was fringed with the most brilliant white hair — immaculate, gleaming hair. His gold eyeglasses, which were very transparent and which magnified the gray eyes behind them, his elegant, delicate silver ear-trumpet — (more like some elfin horn, or the ornament of a fairy king or goblin herald,

than a necessary instrument), that horn which was always at hand, always being adjusted to receive good news from the guest — his wonderful neatness and trimness — as if his waistcoat and watch-chain had been burnished upon him — as if his clothes were made of bronze, or as if he were a drawing by Ingres — all these things, as well as the smiling trustfulness (like that of a good child) with which he welcomed everyone, took him out of the actual. You could not believe that he was true. He was as a picture, or as a character of the imagination. Of course he really did belong to a familiar epoch; but somehow his deafness had isolated him and surrounded him with an invisible hothouse. There was a bloom upon him; he radiated a sort of heaven-sent bonhomie. I am sure that if I had seen him in a railroad station without knowing who he was, I should have followed him home, tracked him to his habitat, so as to assure myself that he was an earthborn creature.

Think of such a man's having lived in the America of to-day! He might have come out of London in 1811; he might have lived in Edinburgh in 1830. He was like Charles Lamb; he seemed to be clad in knee-breeches; he was all leisure, all literature,

all tenderness for the feelings of others. I am sure that this quality of hating to hurt anyone's feelings, of avoiding the unpleasant, must somewhere, somehow have run into vice with Dr. Furness. It is wrong to be so tender as he was.

Dr. Furness, as everyone knows, was deaf — so very deaf that one had to speak into his silver ear-trumpet and speak quite loudly in order to reach him. Yet his deafness never separated him from the rest of society, but on the contrary it joined him to others. His expression of perfect benevolence and perfect accord, as he surveyed the dinner-table, his smile of expectation as he caught your eye, gave you something to say. You could not be dumb in his presence. In fact, his deafness had the very opposite influence to that which deafness usually has: it drew you out. He elicited extravagant sallies; he invited foolishness: and when foolishness came, he welcomed it as the Father in the parable welcomed the Prodigal. One knew all the while that somewhere in the middle of all this gayety there lay a great renunciation. This power to give and take innocent pleasure is always bought with a great price. A big lump sum has been paid down at some time in the past,

so great that the interest of it supports the donor forever after; he is care-free.

Dr. Furness had cunning ways, he did cunning things; but they were always very clever. He himself was never deceived for a moment. He understood his drolleries well enough. When, for instance, I asked him why it was, or why he thought it was, that Fanny Kemble had singled out just him as the person to whom she should give Shakespeare's gloves — he assumed the attitude of the ingénue in old English comedy — put his knuckles to his lips, looked archly at the ceiling, bent his head from side to side — "I don't know, I don't know." A lifelong familiarity with old English stage businesses had given him quite a battery of odd little gestures and tones of voice, which were as natural to him as they were unexpected by everyone else.

Dr. Furness had habits of a clockwork regularity. He rose at a certain hour, whatever it was, to the minute, and appeared at breakfast, which was a stately and sumptuous meal, long, luxurious, and social. Then he suddenly disappeared, and I don't know what he did for several hours. He performed his Shakespearian work in the

middle of the night. After sitting up cracking jokes, or reading aloud, till twelve or one, he dismissed everyone and sat down to work till cock-crow. His library was of that sort which is added to the house as a unity — is lighted from the top and surrounded inside with a balcony. The room was full of memorials, pictures, and photographs, and was lined with all the books about Shakespeare, I suppose, in the world. In a small vault or inner sanctuary beyond, a fire-proof holy of holies, he kept his first editions. He had all the folios and a great many of the quartos. (I'm not sure that it is possible to have them all.) Here were kept other treasures more remarkable still— namely, fragments of Shakespeare's mulberry tree, and a pair of gloves which originally belonged to Shakespeare's theatrical properties, and which, after the playwright's decease, were shipped to Avon from London together with the rest of his belongings. These gloves are perhaps the most precious personal relic in the world. I do not know what doubts scholars may throw on their authenticity; but their history is well known and forms a part of the annals of the British stage. At any rate, I felt in looking on

them an overwhelming belief in them—a pang of belief, such as no other personal relic ever gave me.

I cannot say that I always agree with Dr. Furness's views upon Shakespeare's characters. This is a subject upon which the clodhopper has rights of opinion; and some of Dr. Furness's theses seem to me to reflect his own temperament too closely—as, for instance, his views on the love affair between Anthony and Cleopatra. I must confess that his opinions here seem to me to be misjudged and even fantastic. Dr. Furness's romanticism has misled him. It is himself, [not Anthony, and not Shakespeare] that the seraphic Doctor has depicted in his rhapsodical preface to his play. And yet this same enthusiasm which, in this case, betrays Dr. Furness is the pervading cause of his charm. Dr. Furness is never really interested in anything except the poetic kernel of Shakespeare. He deals with the other parts because they must be dealt with. But the reason for all the husk is not to be found in the husk; the reason lies in the poetry. Furness never forgets this; he is in love all the time. He had the sort of adoration for Shakespeare that a schoolboy has for an elder brother. When this quality gets into

a book of any sort, the book becomes happy and vigorous. "Isn't he a glorious fellow? Did you ever hear anything like him?" This is what Furness seems to be constantly saying.

Such is the general nature of Dr. Furness's contributions to Shakespeare's criticism. They sound so small and are so tremendous. For I suppose that the sunlight hidden everywhere in these big yellow volumes is enough to warm the earth. It will surely affect the disposition of all future commentators; and even the philologist, the comparative grammarian, the Indo-Germanic person may be softened, tinged, sweetened, and made into something more nearly resembling a human being, through contact with the unscientific, non-conclusive intellect of Horace Howard Furness.

A short time before his death, Dr. Furness sent me a copy of his Phi Beta Kappa address entitled, "Shakespeare, or What You Will"; and in thanking him for it I sent him the verses printed below, which thus became the occasion of this paper. His death fell like a curtain, unexpectedly, without illness, without premonitory old age; and, as it fell, it left him in our imagination just

as he had always appeared, standing in a sort of radiance.

"Yes, I have seen the wreath of woven flowers
That in your garden (which is Shakespeare's mind)
Have blossomed freshly through the dewy hours,
And which the deaf, old gardener smiled to find.

"Laughed as he found them — saved and wound and gave them:
(The richest trophy that his life could bring),
Shakespeare's they are, and were, and he shall have them
Forever as a fragrant offering.

"So, on thy bier, old servant, tried and tender,
Some loving hand may lay a paler sheaf;
For none but Shakespeare might thy crimson render,
Or match in words the greenness of thy leaf."

HENRY GRAFTON CHAPMAN

V.

HENRY GRAFTON CHAPMAN

HENRY GRAFTON CHAPMAN, who died in his fifty-third year in January, 1913, was one of those quiet men who seem to bear no relation to the age they are born in. By his endowments, his tastes, and his education he was fitted to be an amateur of a kind very common in Europe,— one of the studious, well-nigh learned children of culture, who love books, pictures, music, philosophy, the lamp, and the quiet conclave with infinite good talk. If Henry Chapman had had the fortune to have been born in Europe or in China, and to inherit money, his life would have been a record of cheerful success, even as it was, in America, a record of cheerful toil.

For some reason there was a glory about his boyhood. He was the prize boy of his set; brilliant things were predicted of him by everyone. His talents and charms, his goodness and his good looks set off, as with a

foil, a moral worth which everyone found in him. A singular sweetness and gentleness of disposition remained to him all his life. It survived the more ambitious qualities with which we had all endowed him in his teens. It gilded his life and made his friends forgive him everything; for he was the most negligent of men. You could not see him unless you looked him up and dug him out from among his books and papers. He would hold you in converse on a corner of Broadway at midnight with a discussion about Plato, and would never miss you if he saw you not again for fifteen years — when he would resume the discussion with the old fervor. His talk was ready, apt, amusing, drenched in reading. He was always writing plays which were never produced, and essays just to clear his thoughts. He always had many varieties of tales, poems, and literary ventures on hand. Whenever I met him I wondered why I didn't see more of him. But he was hard to see more of: he was elusive. He sought his own habitat, and would never come out of it, save on compulsion.

The course of his experiments in life, before he settled down to steady work at literature, might easily be paralleled in the lives

of many men of letters in all countries. After Harvard College and the Harvard Law School, came work in law offices, a few discouraging years at the bar, a few other years spent in business ventures. Then five years of organized reform. In this latter field my brother did valuable work, and for some years he was extremely active at Albany as an agent of the Civil Service League. He was also the editor of the League's newspaper. Both his legal training and his literary facility came into play in these avocations. Mr. George McAneny writes me:

"His quiet influence during the period of his active touch with public affairs did a great deal for the betterment of things in this town. I knew him best during his secretaryship in the Civil Service Reform League, to the work of which he gave a devoted order of service — just as his grandfather, John Jay, as a member of Governor Cleveland's first Civil Service Commission, had given before him. He made 'Good Government,' the organ of the League, a much more serviceable organ than it ever had been before, adding to its influence everywhere. He proved, too, a most valu-

able aid in the handling of legislation affecting the Civil Service, proposed from year to year at Albany,— always, I believe, with good result. He went about everything quietly, but he did a lot of useful work."

Henry Chapman certainly was fitted to be a journalist of the first order, but he lacked the impulsion; and I cannot blame him for deserting reform, since this led to his taking up a kind of work for which he had a real gift — namely, translation.

All his life long my brother wrote verses which were marked by singular ease and grace. He was the producer of the occasional verses demanded by his college class, by the Porcellian Club, by the ΦBK, etc. He could write any species of verse, and he loved to do so. His ear was true and very experienced. He knew a little Latin and Greek, and a great deal of French and German, which languages he had learned as a boy in Europe. He could write French and German, and could read, you might say, any modern language; for he had a passion for etymology and was always pushing his studies further in this field. He had a wide, miscellaneous reading in English, French, and German, but his main hobby was

modern philosophy, upon which he loved to hold forth.

In his later years he supported himself by translating libretti and songs. Dr. Baker, the musical adviser of G. Schirmer, with whom Henry was most closely associated in this work, writes as follows in the *Bulletin of New Music:*

"In the death of Henry Grafton Chapman, which occurred on January 16 in New York, the house of G. Schirmer mourns the loss of a friend and gifted coadjutor, a man to whom the musical world owes a debt of gratitude and respect. Of highly versatile talent, Mr. Chapman's life-work—the work which shall live after him—was finally found in the poetic reproduction in English of those choice poems by foreign writers to which music has been set by composers of genius.

"Let none regard this work as a matter of small moment, as something to be tossed off in idle hours, or as something of low degree not to be ranked with the finer products of literary labor. It is true that, only too frequently, a 'good working translation' is the utmost ambition of the English versifier; a version which will 'sing well,' which rhymes

fairly well, and does not conflict too glaringly in accentuation with the original;—as for 'sense' and 'poetic feeling,' these are made wholly secondary considerations, if considered at all.

"Mr. Chapman's work was on a different plane. He entered at once into the mood and spirit of the poem before him. Equally at home in styles naïve, sentimental, humorous, capricious, or passionate, he then, by some genial alchemy of which he possessed the secret, transmuted the exotic prototype into English verse often equal in excellence to, and not seldom surpassing, the original in poetic flow and fervor. He still observed the meter and the accent, and the rhyme, too, wherever possible, but rendered these subordinate to the thought and expression, using them, like the foreign authors, as a vehicle for ideas and emotions, not as a jingle to fit the music. In raising the translation of poems, penned by great writers and vivified and embellished by great tone-poets, from the level of hack-work into the realm of art, Mr. Chapman has rendered inestimable service to the art and practice of song in the English language. So long as many of the finest vocal gems were accessible only in the foreign originals or mediocre translations,

they could not be fully appreciated and enjoyed by the large majority of our singers; but with this exquisite music wedded to real poetry, the value of such songs has been enhanced beyond computation.

"By the foregoing remarks no disparagement is intended of numerous sporadic successful attempts at translation, made and making by other English writers. The point is, that no other musical translator has accomplished a tithe of Mr. Chapman's achievement in this field. In the brief space of about eight years he finished for the firm of G. Schirmer between seven and eight hundred songs, ballads, arias, choruses, and the like; twelve oratorios and cantatas (sacred and secular); and nine complete operas, including works so widely divergent in character as Debussy's 'Pelléas et Mélisande' (Maeterlinck), Leoncavallo's 'Pagliacci,' and Wagner's Tristan und Isolde.' And in how masterly fashion did he overcome the immense difficulties presented by the various masterworks! — difficulties which can be realized only by those who have essayed similar tasks. In his best moments it is as if, upborne by the inspiration of the poem, he rose with the authors themselves to their own height and surveyed the

lyric or dramatic situation with the same lofty passion, the same swift and sure glance. From the simplest folk-song to the sublime complexities of 'Tristan,' he made each passing mood his own. He did not roughly 'pluck the heart' from out the stranger verses; he intimately blended their essence, their soul, with his own spirit, and poured the mingled tide into a mold of finely wrought English. To their inspiration he lent his own; and many of the poems so molded are genuine works of genius. What he could do when inspired solely by the music, without the transcription of others' thoughts and effusions, is shown in his delightful original verses accompanying the 'Blue Danube' waltzes."

THE FUNCTION OF THE CHURCH SCHOOL

Address to the boys at St. Paul's School, Concord, N. H.

VI

THE FUNCTION OF THE CHURCH SCHOOL

If you have ever taken a walk in the woods with a naturalist or a hunter, you must have felt what ears, what eyes, what senses the man had. You must have felt that he was walking in a magic world, among sights and sounds that you could not catch, a world throbbing with idea and wonderful with reality. Now all of education may be thought of as a means of giving to youth the keys of the different worlds that exist about us,— exist all together, one inside the other, like the celestial spheres of the old Astronomy,— worlds of different sorts of reality, different kinds of intellect,— every-one of them as real and as thrilling to the soul that lives in it as the woods are to the naturalist or to the hunter,— a place where the air is filled with meaning and where every sound, every leaf that falls or twig that cracks in the distance, brings a message

to the listener, a summons, an idea,— communication with the universe.

In the A B C stage of education the meaning of it all is not very apparent. Now and then there is born a child of genius who takes a passionate interest in the alphabet and knows by instinct that the letters on his blocks, or the drawing of a horse on his slate, or the strange dots and lines of his first music lesson are mystic things which put him in touch with all intellect, all history, all religion,— all the gigantic forces of human life and destiny. But for the most part children have to grind forward without knowing very clearly what it is all about, or why they are put through the regimen. The mind is so complex, and all these various spirit worlds are so strangely interlocked with each other,— and besides this, so little is known about youth and development,— that you can never be quite sure that you are on the right track. When you try to fit education to the individual, you must keep a loose rein, and remember that your knowledge of the individual is very shadowy, and your knowledge of what comes next, of what the creature will turn into next, is very shadowy. You may be feeding a caterpillar under the belief that it

is a silk-worm, and behold it turns out to be a June bug. The surest thing is to follow general principles and general traditions. Even this is very unsure; but it is less unsure than anything else. All of you boys have been getting the sort of education that has been gradually evolved and invented for boys; and it all bears some relation to the immense antiquity out of which it comes down to us, and to the heights and depths of life, the totality of human experience, of which it forms a part. You must make the best out of it that you can. You see, education is merely the attempt to prevent the youth from missing his birthright,— to prevent him from going by his destination in the night, while he holds a ticket for the great festival in his sleeping hands.

I am now fifty years old, and I find in going back to school and college and in meeting my old classmates, how grateful they are to their schools and colleges, how they hug the little scrap of insight which destiny accorded them, their glimpse into the peep show. They were given just one look, and then they were seized by the shoulder and hurled into practical life, the life of business, of self-support, of unidea'd labor, in which there was little time to do more than oc-

casionally remember that peep show. I fear that the same experience awaits many of you. It is because a little education is so infinitely much greater than none at all that you are here. It is because the beginnings of education,— no matter how great,— may be got at St. Paul's School, that you are here.

You must not expect to understand very much about school just yet. The general rule seems to be that we do not understand our experiences until they have become past history. For instance, you will find old men describing their school days and describing how they parted from their parents, describing the holidays, and giving in the recital the very atmosphere of reality and of romance,— of human life,— which at the moment there was no time for. Yet somehow the great romance was alive and was going on in those little boys. It is a very rare matter when any of us at any time in life sees things as they are at the moment. This happens at times of great spiritual exaltation, when our minds are so awakened, and the inner and half-slumbering part of us is so awakened that we become aware of what is going on about us and of the infinite great worlds of force, of feeling and of idea in

which we live, and in the midst of which we have always been living. These worlds are really in progress all the time; and the difference between one man and another, or the difference in the same man at different times, is the difference in his *awareness* of what is happening.

I used to wonder what it was in Beethoven that was so impressive and why we are so moved by his music. About what is he talking; and where does it all go when he stops? There is a sense in which Beethoven's music is always going on within us. Those inner chords are forever vibrating, that mystery play is forever on the stage, that pæan going up: those human strains are being given off by the fibres within us all the time. And Beethoven's awareness of this music has enabled him to let these strains become expressed and continued outward into sound. He did not exactly make that music; but merely had the art to transmit it,—to allow it to have its way through him. The old poetic metaphors about inspiration express the dynamics of an eternal transmission of power from soul to soul, and express them very well.

I am speaking all this time in terms of education; but I am really thinking about

religion. Now religion is not so much a thing by itself as a way of feeling, an inward experience as to the nature of life, which colors and changes the world. It is a personal experience. No one can describe it or convey it to another. There has always been this incalculable element about religious experience. The wind bloweth where it listeth — even so is everyone that is born of the spirit. Religion is the consciousness of the presence of God. It often descends upon people in trouble, in moments of crisis. When all else is taken, it rushes in — I should say, *seems* to rush in; for it is really always present in all men,— only disguised and concealed by the clouds of other interests and occupations.

You boys must often wonder, as I used to wonder in this room, what it is all about? — What is this religion that seems to be of so much importance? It is evidently at the bottom of St. Paul's School. The founders are founding it, the rectors are preaching it, the choirs are singing it. We walk it in and out of chapel, and rustle it in hymn books and undergo it in reproachful lectures for our misconduct. Some people seem to believe that it is pocketed in scriptural texts, and surely fitted into the

catechism. All this language of religious feeling that surrounds you at St. Paul's School is the language of the mystery of life. That mystery will endure forever. It will outlast contemporary science, and overshadow future science. It comes to you in the voice of many generations speaking about the profoundest truths of life. You are here living in the sound of that voice. You hardly understand it; you hear it unconsciously; at times you catch a few syllables that seem intelligible, seem meant for you — they are somehow communications from the great power in the midst of which our life goes on, the power which drives and is our life. If there were any sure way by which the child could be put into conscious relation with God,— if he could be shown these mysteries, as he may be led out and shown a waterfall,— then all this machinery would not be needed: — all this literature, this music, discipline, prayer, praise and worship of God might be dispensed with or replaced. But, as the old Jews used to say "No man hath seen God at any time." This whole matter is not a thing by itself which can be grasped. It is a part of everything else. It underlies all thought: it is something which grasps us. When it comes, it comes.

It is not a universal experience. Some people, great people, men of power and sanctity, who fill the world with good deeds, and fill us who gaze upon them with a sense of religion,— have lived without that sense themselves. The power that works in them is veiled from them.

There is one danger that hangs about religion: it hangs about science, about thought, about human character,— the danger of feeling sure one is right. The evils that follow in the wake of this danger are so universal that perhaps we ought to think of the whole matter as a law of nature. If a man begins to believe that he holds the truth fast, holds it in a formula that is like an indestructible casket, then immediately the casket begins to dissolve, and we discover that the truth never was in his casket at all, but behind it,— as it is behind all things. There is a sort of docility of mind, a knowledge of our own impotence, that is very near to the threshold of intellectual vision and to the threshold of religious feeling. Whenever a man has this sentiment very strongly, people almost always give him credit for being somehow a religious person — even if the man protests he is not interested in religion. It seems to be true that great intellects are

almost always filled with this sense of not quite understanding what truth is, of being powerless and ignorant. Emerson said that it has always been the mark of an intellect of the first order that a man should feel about the world as if the explanation of it could not be given here; but that the whole matter must draw its meaning from something else, something we do not know. The people who feel like this are not always conscious of God. I would not cite them as examples of religious feeling. I cite them as examples of that docility which is very near to religion. This thing is very easy to lose. I have often thought that this docility which evaporates so easily may be referred to in the text "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Perhaps the text means, "The consciousness of God is the first step in an understanding of the universe."

A man who feels this freshly, realizes its mystery, and will not wish to cram the experience down the throat of another. But with thinking comes certitude, and with certitude comes error. It is quite strange to notice that the attitude of many modern scientists towards contemporary religious thought is identical with the attitude of the

mediæval papacy towards heresy. The world to-day is full of professors and students of science who would gladly perish in the market-place, and at the stake, if they could thereby advance the cause of science by an iota. Many of these men dread the older church teachings only because they have a fierce conviction that those church dogmas inevitably lead to the unhappiness of the people. The state of mind of these scientists is the same state of mind which a perfectly holy pope lived in with regard to heresy,— viz.: — a fierce hostility to something which he felt sure must lead to eternal unhappiness. Both sets of men, both the pope and the scientist have lost the freshness of their feeling through hard thinking; and each in setting up a monopoly, a sort of tyranny. The docility has died out of each of them.

Indeed docility is dying out in each one of us all the time; and it has to be renewed every morning. And so, indeed, it is being renewed: it is being freshly born constantly in new and younger men. And whenever one of these tyrannies or monopolies is set up, truth always finds means to move out from under the edge and dominion of the tyranny, and to establish its camp or king-

dom in the breasts of humble people who know little of theology or little of science. Here then is another law of nature. The faith that is given to each of us is medicine to the unfaith of the world. We are the cure.

Behind all the visions of prophets, the aims of churches, the struggles of teachers, behind apparent progress and retrogression there are great waves of faith that beat through humanity,— you might call them apparitions of God,— epochs when the miraculous nature of the world is understood, and mystic sayings become clear as print. Such an epoch is coming over the world at this moment. I cannot walk down the street or open a letter from a friend without murmuring, "Prophets and kings have desired to see the things that ye see, and have died without seeing them." We have been returning to the apostolic age. Physics and metaphysics have of late joined hands to proclaim an unthinkable power visibly ruling all things.

I am constantly meeting people who heal the sick through prayer and live in a wholehearted simplicity of feeling which brings to mind New Testament times. I am thinking of individual men and women, not of

any church; for they frequently belong to no church, but are mere children of the New Testament. These people appear to me to be extremely unlike the mediæval people. They are more vigorous, more at one with life, more courageous, unconcerned, supported by faith. The mediæval mind was always a little terrified, and there is something sickly about the mediæval feeling for the miraculous,— something that is often sentimental, often hysterical, often childish. The enormous emotionalism of the Middle Ages is generally tinged with a hot-house element of willful intensity, which is very different from the natural human feeling of the earliest Christians and the strong faith of the latest. Then, too, the preoccupation with church discipline which fills the intervening centuries, makes pictures in our imagination which do not fit in with the Bible pictures. It seems as if the teachings of Christ had not been understood since that first century until to-day,— as if that teaching were, within the past few years, beginning to affect our minds in the right kind of way. During all those centuries between the crucifixion and to-day, Christ's teaching was administered and used as a drug. But now men are more willing to let

it do its own work. It is better understood. It is seen to be a part of the light and air, of the palpitation of life, of the machinery of the universe.

MR. BRIMMER

VII

MR. BRIMMER

MARTIN BRIMMER was the finest gentleman that I have ever known intimately; and I never met him without feeling that I myself was a boor, but that this was of no consequence, because his breeding and goodness sufficed to cover my nakedness. I might gambol or even wallow, but he would blossom in the perfection of self-effacing courtesy.

He was the best of old Boston; for he was not quite inside the Puritan tradition and was a little sweeter by nature and less sure he was right than the true Bostonian is. He was a lame, frail man, with fortune and position; and one felt that he had been a lame, frail boy, lonely, cultivated, and nursing an ideal of romantic honor. There was a knightly glance in his eye and a seriousness in his deep voice that told of his living, and of his having lived always, in a little Camelot of his own. He was not quixotic, but he

was independent. There were portcullises and moats and flowered gardens around him. He was humble with a kind of Hidalgo humility,— the humility of a magnificent impoverished Portuguese Duke. There was nothing sanctimonious about his mind, and this is what really distinguished him from the adjacent Bostonian nobility.

In looking at the eighteenth century portraits of Puritan Elders, I have often reflected that the Puritans were traders. Whatever they may have been when they first landed, they soon became keen-eyed and practical, hard and cold. Their resemblance to the old Venetian merchants may be traced in the Doge's Palace, where the cold, Yankee faces loom down familiarly on the shuddering American tourist. I could attach to almost every portrait in Venice an honored Puritan name; and, with a little study and reflection, I could tell how each pictured aristocrat must have made his money. There was in Mr. Brimmer nothing of that austere look which comes from holding on to property and standing pat. And besides this, he was warm; not, perhaps, quite as warm as the Tropics, but very much warmer than the average Beacon Street mantel-pieces were. He would dis-

course and laugh heartily about these mantel-pieces,— instead of turning haughty and assuming a look of profaned intimacy, if anyone noticed the absence of fire in them. There was a spark of fight too in Mr. Brimmer; as I found to my cost once, when I received a letter from him beginning, "Sir," in the old dueling style, and more beautiful in its chirography than anything a merely democratic age can produce.

At the time I knew him best, he was no longer young, and was the figure-head of philanthropy, art and social life in Boston. Mrs. Brimmer loved *luxe*. Her banquets were as dignified and well mounted as such things can possibly be; and the banquets were followed by ceremonial receptions of intimate friends: dear people they were, too. The whole procedure was accompanied by a certain gorgeousness and parade, which used to terrify me, and not me only; for the whole of Boston was at that time awed by the splendor of these parties, yet proud of their grand manner. When I went to London a few years later, I saw some old-fashioned coachmen with round wigs,— I think they were made of glass,— and I suggested that Mrs. Brimmer ought to put some of these wigs on her coachmen; — but this

was never done. The wigs, however, were on the banquets; and the old-fashioned family servants, the inner domestic reality of everything in the household, made it a most notable establishment.

Mr. Brimmer ate no more than a bird, and smoked thin, straw-colored cigars. He cared nothing for luxury, but moved in it as an old lord might move in a castle, just because it was there: to him it was his attic. His clothes were remarkable. They came from England, and were of the finest stuffs, and of the ancientest models; and they hung upon him negligently. This, by the way, was characteristic of the true old Bostonians. They got their clothes from Poole; but they never tried them on. Yet, instead of making a ridiculous figure in the garments, they dignified their apparel. They wore their clothes well; and I have seen octogenarian millionaires, with youthful hose well saved upon their shrunk shanks, pacing Beacon Street like old masters. Say what you will, there was something strong about the old Commonwealth; and, as it melted slowly into modern times, I watched and treasured the apparition. It was a great relief to me, as a college lad who was passing through many wrestlings of the

spirit over shirts and pumps, and who thought there might exist some dreadful law of correctness in the higher circles of society,— it was a great relief to me, after I had conscientiously bought a white tie of the proper contemporary cut, to find that Martin Brimmer had done no such thing. Here was the finest gentleman I had ever seen; but when he wanted a tie, he caused a valet to open a trunk and to pull from the bottom of it a tie of seventeen years before. Mr. Brimmer put on the tie none too carefully; and came down stairs with a grave courtesy. The Italian nieces adjusted his tie, the red silk drawing-room with the statue of Story's Cleopatra was thrown open, and the great world of little Boston arrived with its arms outspread.

Mrs. Brimmer afforded ideal contrasts to her husband. She was large, imposing, handsome, blonde and infantile. Her cheeks had never been roughly visited by the winds of heaven. Indeed she was one of those people whom the world instinctively surrounds with a hedge of protection. Her dearest friends never quite told her the truth; and I am sure that, in childhood, her playmates must always have petted her and given her the prettiest string of beads.

She was a queen-bee, twice as large and twice as handsome as other women; and she wore Damascened brocades and ostrich feathers, and had eyes as blue as the sky.

That age was an age of witticisms and of personal hits, which were recorded and handed about. To-day the taste for bon-mots has waned, and if anyone should bring such a thing as a witticism into a drawing-room, people would balk at it and regard it as an old snuff-box. But in those days, sallies of wit were correct and conventional. Dr. Holmes and Tom Appleton and Judge Hoar were the professional wits of Boston, just as Evarts and Travers were the professional wits of New York. Behind these veterans there were hundreds of skirmishing humorists who made social life agreeable. Evening receptions were regarded as a natural form of amusement; people stood in a pack, and ate and drank, and talked volubly till midnight. And they enjoyed it too. There was a zest in it. I don't know why the world has become so dull of recent years, and society so insipid. People in Boston in the Eighties knew how to enjoy themselves.

There seems to exist a great invisible sponge that is always passing forward and

back across society and wiping out coteries and traditions. It never succeeds in obliterating all of cultivation or all of happiness, yet it seems forever on the point of doing so. One of the staple illusions of middle life is the vision of a Vanishing Past. The experience must be classed with youth's illusions of an oncoming Roseate Future: both visions are normal. Indeed it is the vision of the Vanishing Past that has caused me to write these sketches. I am afraid that I may forget those vivid scenes of youth unless I write them down. They have risen in my memory recently, as the mirage rises, — ever at a fixed distance from the beholder; and I fear they may disappear again as I move farther away from them. Perhaps there is nothing of monumental interest in these balls, weddings and tea parties that I attended in Boston as an undergraduate,— except as all things have historic interest. Boston was a family,— a club,— and is so still. Some people resent the family atmosphere of Boston; but I always liked it. The people there speak of "Cousin John" and expect you to know to whom they refer. But this is charming! Someone has said that Boston was the only city in the world where when two ladies meet in

the street, one says, "How is he?" The great business of Bostonians was to place values upon everything in the world, with conscientious accuracy. Professor Norton once said to me on the steps of Sanders Theatre, after a performance of Beethoven's "Eroica Symphony," that, after all, the "Sentiment" of the funeral march was a little "forced." This was charming, too. Of course it is not great or of the great world. And yet I know that in Paris and Berlin, in Oxford and Munich, there are constantly arising cliques and coteries that go on in the same sort of exclusive way. A sect arises whose pursuit it is to praise Cimabue or damn Handel. I knew of a French artist of whom great things were expected, who could only laugh when Michael Angelo was named. Michael Angelo made him laugh. He could do nothing but laugh. It was Boston's foible to set metes and bounds to everything: that was the game which we played; but it was a good game, and the players were among the best-hearted people in the world.

Mr. Brimmer's cultivation was, as has been seen, not of the Bostonian brand. He had no pose of any kind, no ambition. His cultivation was unconscious.

He was as much at home with a Turk as with an Englishman, and had the natural gravity which marks the Asiatic. He could, upon occasion, be severe and masterful; and at such times his thin jaw would protrude beneath his falling mustache. In that age the wandering Englishman of fashion was apt to drop in upon an American dinner-party in his traveling jacket. One such offender Mr. Brimmer caused to ascend in the elevator to become arrayed in a suit from the antique and honorable wardrobe of the house, before being admitted to the feast. I am sure that the host spoke with the sweetness of King Arthur and Galahad in making the suggestion to the stranger.

Mr. Brimmer's most powerful quality was his patience. He could endure and go on enduring almost to eternity. To a man of his delicate physique and inner sensitiveness, the jolting of life must ever have been painful; and he seemed often to be in pain; but whether it was physical pain or mental pain was hard to guess. Of all the virtues the virtue of patience is most foreign to youth: his power of patience impressed me and awed me. I am quite sure that if I should see him again I should be as much at the mercy of his superiority and

of his quietude as I was at the age of twenty-three.

I will not attempt to describe Mr. Brimmer's public activities. Everyone revered him and regarded him as a model citizen, the benefactor and manager of museums and colleges. I only knew his social life. He must always have stood by himself: he seemed not to belong to any of the existing Bostonian types. He told me that, at some period during the war, when the cause of the North looked particularly hopeless, he had been at a dinner where many of the most prominent men in Boston were gathered to consider the military situation. It was a formal occasion, at which men gave their views *seriatim*. He was the only man present who thought the war could be pushed to a successful issue. Perhaps in every generation there are solitary men, who live like sentinels within their own thoughts, watching the world. Their very lack of personal aim makes them significant. They exert an influence that is peculiarly indefinable. They qualify other men.

The Brimmers had no children; but their household, and indeed the whole little kingdom that went with it, was greatly warmed and caused to glow by the presence of the

two Italian nieces. Each of these girls grew up to be a remarkable woman, and died early, leaving a great gap behind her, and people looking up into heaven. I must speak of them in this place, however, not so much for their own sakes as because they were a part of Mr. and Mrs. Brimmer. They were the life of the establishment; and all the horses and carriages, banquets and ceremonies, all the empty childless wealth of the Brimmer household was glorified by their presence. These young ladies were in reality only half Italian, but they looked wholly Italian, and they were in themselves thoroughly foreign. The woman of northern Europe is, after all, a washed-out affair. Compared to the Mediterranean woman, she is a drudge and a good creature merely. The southern woman is an independent spirit. In spite of the Greek theories as to the suppression of the sex, Phædra, Medea and Sappho were as little suppressed as it is possible to be. They had freedom of thought and of conduct. Shakespeare's women owe their charm to this quality of freedom. He filched the type out of southern stories, and he dressed it in northern innocence. These two girls then, who looked like figures out of the Vita Nuova, brought

with them from Italy the daring of a country where a woman is as good as a man, while they inherited in their own natures and from their American ancestors a sort of Anglo-Saxon piety. They were orphans, devout Protestants, much traveled, very good looking, rounded and spontaneous, modest and yet frankly emotional, forthcoming and yet remote. I shall not forget the first time that I saw them both. It was at one of the great social functions I have spoken of and at the moment when the family were awaiting the arrival of the crowd. The girls stood before the fireplace, supporting the household like cariatyds and moved about through the rooms like some new kind of nymphs; — but not at all like the nymphs of Diana, rather like nymphs of Ceres and Proserpina which the God Pan had let loose in Boston.

These young girls hung garlands about the declining years of their aunt and uncle, being as devoted as daughters could have been; and then they vanished, almost at the same time that the old people died. Thus the whole structure of that enchanted palace, with its gates and gardens, its old servants, and stately banquets, its rose bushes and aviaries, and with the old Knight Brim-

mer and the two beautiful Italian girls,—seemed to fall together and disappear in a night. How they arose, I never knew, nor how they vanished.

The following lines were written at the time of his death:

The mask of life is fallen. Behold the man!
Such was he, and so is. How easily
Do all the accidents of earth drop off.
And as they fall, the Immortality
The soul departs to, shines through the clay.
Severe, calm, dominant: a general.—
Frail, yet the very manifest of Power.—
A look of life-long conquest on his brow.
Christ Militant, Thy soldier as he lies!
Not for our eyes this bearing, but for Thine.

PAPA

MRS. WHITMAN

VIII

MRS. WHITMAN

SOCIAL talent is a true and a rare thing; and though it may contain some tincture of ambition, as talent always does, this is but a small part of the phenomenon. The essence of it is a reverence for the talents of other people, a belief in the powers of others, a spiritual hospitality — which discovers that other people are remarkable and almost makes them so by lavishing an incredible faith upon their development.

The earliest reputation that Mrs. Whitman achieved was that of being an unknown lady from some savage town,— Baltimore, perhaps,— who had appeared in Boston. It was not many years, however, before she had become a center of social influence, and of that peculiar kind of social influence in which there are strands of art, idealism,— intellect. The reason for her enduring conquest was that her chief interest always lay with the young. Thus the future was with her.

The discovery must every day be made afresh that conversation is the life of literature, and perhaps of all the fine arts. Writing is a sort of conventional lie, and a rather dangerous one. The very greatest men never write at all. But there is an essential truth about conversation, which is due to its fluid non-conclusiveness. Talk leaves every question open: and every question really is open. This is what is meant by the so-called "art of conversation." Plato knew the secret, and often resorts to a sort of laborious equivocation in order to keep life in his dialogues. The man who writes always wants to conclude something instead of being content to lay it bare. But ideas sprout best after they have arisen and have been plowed under in conversation. Without this, they are apt to spread with a sickly luxuriance into unprunable philosophy,— dogmatic, difficult and falser than flippancy itself.

I have sometimes thought that one difference between French and German literature is that the Frenchman is always in a parlor; while the German, on the other hand, lives in the mining-camp of his profession. Of course there are German poets and novelists who deal with social life; but

the hewers and diggers of the race are always encroaching; they occupy history, they invade journalism, they set up their barracks around philosophy. They have destroyed the German language; and all this because they work in silence. Good style is founded on speech. It is a weakness in our colleges that the students are always scribbling in the lecture rooms. The fountain pens should be taken from them at the doors of the class rooms. Examinations ought to be oral where possible, and nothing ought to be found on an examination paper except what has been threshed out in open discussion. If we could go one step further and forbid the professors to read their remarks from manuscript, we should take a long stride towards the life of the intellect.

It must be my excuse for this long preface that Mrs. Whitman was one who, somehow, represented a rediscovery of the importance of conversation. It was the intrinsic nature of the woman rather than any special intention that led her to take the course she did. Clever men love to be appreciated, and when, as rarely happens, a woman is found with so much enthusiasm for intelligence that she turns a special re-

flector upon anyone possessing it and gives him the shock and glow of recognition, the clever men will flock about her, and a sort of salon will arise. It was not men alone whom Mrs. Whitman fascinated by her sympathy. She subdued every sort of person, especially old ladies, especially young school girls, especially her own incorruptible contemporaries, who had never known such a creature before, but who sooner or later lay in chains to her resourceful personality.

I remember a curious Bostonian cockfight at her studio, where Professor Royce and Judge Oliver Wendell Holmes were pitted against each other to talk about the Infinite. Royce won, of course,— somewhat after the manner of Gladstone,— by involving the subject in such adamantine cobwebs of voluminous rolling speculation that no one could regain his senses thereafter. He not only cut the ground from under everyone's feet; but he pulled down the sun and moon, and raised up the ocean, and everyone was shipwrecked and took to small planks and cups of tea.

Mrs. Whitman was surrounded by geniuses. I didn't always believe in the rest of them, but I believed that somehow I must

be a good one,— not so great as she believed, but still something quite considerable in my own way. She had an unterrified way of dealing with social life that would have made her a force in any community. If James Russell Lowell came to town, she would give a dinner party of twelve young people to meet him. He played up considerably upon one such occasion, though in a manner that was more historically interesting than socially pleasant. This was at the end of his life, when he wore a high hat with British obstinacy, and looked askance at the Common. He exactly resembled the portraits which we see of him on the calendars. And when some nice Senior from Harvard ventured to launch a very decent remark in his direction, Mr. Lowell corrected his grammar and delivered a lecture upon the uses of "shall" and "will." This was "Seeing Boston" with a vengeance; and yet who would not be glad to carry about with him the recollection of the megaphone?

Mrs. Whitman used, in entertaining, to mingle old and young together. To do this is the first requisite of agreeable society, and the only way of civilizing the younger generation. Wherever the practice falls

into disuse, the boys and girls will run to seed as they grow up. Young people are naturally barbarians; and unless they are furnished with examples of good manners they soon become negligent, unashamed and illiterate. They forget those reserves which embody the traditions of centuries, and which add charm and intensity to social enjoyment. They would forget reading and writing, history, clothes, the multiplication table and how to tell time, if they were entirely abandoned by their elders. Well-bred older persons unconsciously dominate the imagination of the young, and inform them as to many matters without uttering a word. In this way good traditions are preserved. The civilizing process goes forward in the drawing rooms of every country in Europe; but in America the practice prevails of leaving the young people to themselves. The consequence is that the children of our nicest families often behave as if they had never seen an educated person or entered a drawing room. The young savages are at Coney Island now, and will be at Hayti to-morrow, unless the custom is revived of bringing old and young together for the amusements of life.

This lack of social training in our young

people is, by the way, merely a sample of our great national defect. If one were to give, in a single word, the difference between Europe and America, the word would be training. What we need most in every department of life,— in scholarship, in science, in journalism, in administrative business and in the decorative arts,— is training. Neither aptitude, intellect, nor ambition; neither love nor religion is lacking to us. Our great need is a need of training.

It was not through any pedagogic theory, however, that Mrs. Whitman was led to mingle old and young at her parties. She was devoted to the individuals that she asked to her house; and that was the whole secret of their being there.

There are people whose interests and affections lie in the world of personality, to whom the whole of life is made up of people. Mrs. Alice Freeman Palmer (whom I never met) was such a woman. Not thoughts, not ideas, not religions, but people made the universe for her; and this gave her incommunicable, unimaginable access to people's hearts. She held the keys of them, — thousands of keys to thousands of individuals,— and they each felt themselves to be understood when they met her; they felt

as it were, in contact with the power that made them. This sort of entry into people's minds Mrs. Whitman also had, though it was in a field of life quite different from Mrs. Palmer's field. Her province was both wider and narrower than Mrs. Palmer's. But for each of these women, people made up life. If you will consider the great permanent, practical needs of the world, you will see that one of them is the need of such focal personalities as these. Our University towns to-day are little Meccas for young enthusiasm. How sad is it to see the ignorant freshmen wandering about Harvard Square — and to find the same men again as Seniors, often wandering back to their distant homes, having found the cribs at Harvard but not having found anyone who could teach them how to draw down the fodder. Benevolence alone will not make a teacher, nor will learning alone do it. The gift of teaching is a peculiar talent, and implies a need and a craving in the teacher himself.

It would be impossible to say how much a whole generation, of whom I was one, owed to Mrs. Whitman; for her activity introduced us to one another and brought us forward. She would take no end of

trouble. For years after many of us had left Boston, upon hearing that one of us was to pass through the town, she would improvise a meeting of the twenty persons the visitor most desired to see there. When she died a whole society seemed to be suddenly extinguished. Vesuvius had covered the town of Boston, and we went about poking among the ashes to find each other in holes, corners and side streets.

I find again and again in writing these memories that the most telling personalities I have known often, upon reflection, vaguely suggest tragedy. But tragedy is too strong a word; — perhaps renunciation or apparent failure would be better. The men and women who make the best boon companions seem to have given up hope of doing something else. They have, perhaps, tried to be poets and painters; they have tried to be actors, scientists and musicians. But some defect of talent or of opportunity has cut them off from their pet ambition, and has thus left them with leisure to take an interest in the lives of others. Your ambitious man is selfish. No matter how secret his ambition may be, it makes him keep his thoughts at home. He is putting pennies in the slot for himself every few

moments. What sort of a man is that, then, to open one's heart to? He would be sure to advise you to take a liver-pill and to think no more of the matter. But the heartbroken people,— if I may use the word in a mild, benevolent sense,— the people whose wills are subdued to fate, give us consolation, recognition and welcome. There is nothing that we can do for such natures in return save to accept the situation and be thankful.

GREEK AS A PLEASURE

IX

GREEK AS A PLEASURE

I KNOW not how it may be with other men, but to me, poetical translations of the Greek tragedians have ever been one of the disappointments and annoyances of life. The great reputations of the originals stand out as a never-dying taunt and challenge, luring on the adventurous soul. As he approaches the Greek text, these poetical versions pounce forward upon him, seize, bewilder, fatigue and out-weary him with their thousand-fold flounces and flappings of literary contrivance. They dance like gypsies and pose like models, till he retires to his tent in disgust — retires miles and miles away, to his rightful avocation, to family life, politics and modern literature. Then again, it may be years later, on some fine day his attention is again caught by the looming Colossi afar off behind the huts of the preposterous scholars, and again he glances towards Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides.

Now there is a mean, sneaking, and despised band of hackmen, who, for a few pence stand ready to give one a near view of the great figures. I mean the literal translators, and formerly these honest villains would really bring one up to the great creatures and show one something of their anatomy. To be sure, you were not in good society while with the Bohns—you were not in literature, but you got a whiff and inkling that was of mighty interest; you got a Greek feeling, a gritty taste of truth; you could imagine the poetic form as readily as you could imagine the theatrical setting. I have noticed with alarm in more recent years, a growing tendency of the universities to suborn these useful hacks and to dress them in belles lettres. The varlets now wear shirt frills. The good old tramp translators are going out; and the Colossi are being enclosed by a syndicate of impenetrable literary ambition. It is a vain solace to remember Edward Fitzgerald and Gilbert Murray — and if you will, Browning, Swinburne, Matthew Arnold and the other translators of genius, who have enriched the English language with transfusions of amazing beauty, drawn from the Greek. The value of such men is a value

added to modern life and to English literature. It all tends to advertise, yet to obscure, the Greek. They are in an unconscious conspiracy to befool the world with new sorceries, and to enclose the oracles with an interpretation so dazzling and so engaging as to balk the curiosity of half the world.

When I made this discovery, I determined to learn Greek, or at any rate to read Greek by the light of every facility except literature — a little of it anyway — a play, half a play, a speech, a couplet — something that was in itself the thing I sought, and not a rendering of it. I had recourse to the garret of memory and there I found a small seedbag of moldy Greek, and with this I began experiments. On reëxamining the first readers and easy grammars which my whole generation had been put through, it seemed to me that they were admirable primers. None need be better. Then why did I not know Greek? The reason was that I had never followed up the beginnings. I had never read a page of Greek out of natural curiosity, nor had I ever seen anyone else do such a thing as to read Greek for pleasure. If anyone will read ten pages of English in the manner in which the schoolboy

is taught Greek, he will see why Greek is dropped by the boy as soon as possible. Let anyone analyze ten pages of English, answer grammatical questions upon it, let him be asked to parse and give the parts of irregular verbs, to distinguish between varieties of subjunctive, and he will begin to loathe English literature. For some deep psychological reason the best books to construe are often dull books. Perhaps an amusing book might distract the student's attention. Cæsar's Commentaries is the dullest book in Latin. It is like making a road to read it. It is not a book; it is a stone-crushing machine. The teacher, a two-dollar-a-day man, stands beside the machine and runs it. And this is the Classics.

It may be asked, At what point should the reading for pleasure begin? It should begin at about the second lesson, when some entertaining sentence or verse should be learned — as the Lorelei is learned on the first day of German. A little of the language should be put in alive into the child's mind each day; and the grammar should then come behind and sweep up, and explain; it should be kept as a necessary utensil. This relationship should be maintained throughout life; and the attention should be

kept on the meanings which occur in sentences and verses, rather than on the shadows of them which the grammars have worked out. The reason why the cart is put before the horse in classical education is that the grammarians through whose admirable labors it is that we possess the classics at all, have always been interested in the cart. It has been their province to study out a rule; and they have interposed this rule between us and the language. They have done it with the best intentions.

There is another circumstance which largely accounts for our inherited misteaching of Latin and Greek. The learned world has been digging out the classics for the last four hundred years; and the ideals of the learned world are accurate scholarship and scientific precision. It is probably right that the learned world should have such ideals — or should have had them during this epoch. And yet accurate scholarship and scientific precision are illusions in the case of language, and there is no scholar living who could write a page of Greek without making ludicrous errors — errors of the sort that the Anglo-Indian makes in writing English, which he has learned from books. If even Mr. Mackail or Gilbert

Murray or Nauck, that great, horrible mythic monster — should spend a whole day in dove-tailing phrases which they had fished out of Plato or Thucydides to make an essay of, the chances are that any Athenian would laugh five times to the page over the performance.

If the whole subject were dealt with more lightly, if Greek were treated as, say, French is treated by Frenchmen and Italian by Italians, hundreds of boys would learn Greek with delight and read it easily all their lives, progressing from the simpler authors to the more difficult ones as one goes from Æsop to Thucydides. The whole parade of accuracy should be deliberately subordinated, and allowed to take its rank in each pupil's mind according to his ambition, destination and disposition. If a boy is going to become a teacher of Greek he must take the grammar seriously, but if he only wants to read Greek as he reads French he can get on with a very distant salute to many charming questions.

There should be a great Reader in large print, made up of bits and fragments — dotes, verses, scenes from the dramatists, fragments of Plutarch, Homer and Herodotus. And the boys should be encouraged

to read in this book small bits at a time, and easy bits first. And the teacher should be satisfied when the sense is understood and should push the boys on to read and to read, and not to bother about the grammar. Enough grammar will filter into them by degrees to make them understand the constructions — and what else is grammar for? Let the tutor have no ambition to make the boys write Greek. The desire to write Greek is an exotic thing. If a boy has it, let him be encouraged, of course; but let it not be forced upon the next boy. As a matter of fact, the best way to learn to write any language is to read plenty of it; to learn fragments by heart, and fill the mind with the sound of it; then to write it by ear; and thereafter to work up the grammar in correcting what has been written. This is the way to learn French or German; why not Greek? Language is a thing of the ear, and is most easily learned by the ear, and in quantities. Let the children have more Greek, and ever more Greek, and let grammar and critical analysis be kept for dessert.

When one thinks of the thousands of teachers who are obliged to plod year after year through the same portions of Xenophon and Virgil and through the same

scenes of Homer, just because of the fear of the Learned World lest the boys should learn the wrong kind of Greek — when one sees the stunting of intelligence, the deadening of interest that must come from such a process — one does not wonder at the decay of Greek in our universities. We have been doing what is hard; we ought to do what is easy.

This long preface may introduce a few brief remarks upon the pleasure and instruction a man may get from a language which he understands in an imperfect, self-taught way. A person who knows, or thinks he knows, no Latin may experience this pleasure by looking over a collection of Latin phrases and proverbs. His brain is fed and transformed by a new stimulus. No one need apologize for attacking the classics in the spirit of amateur curiosity. It was in this manner that Goethe read them. Nor need we believe that their gifts and their instructions are poured out in proportion to the accuracy of the recipient's education in grammar. There are fountains which are closed through the study of grammar as well as fountains which are opened. A belief in the importance of grammar often acts as a grating between mind and litera-

ture. There is, to be quite frank, a certain amount of humbug about all grammar. This was true in the time of Protagoras and Aristotle, and became more true as the study was more seriously pursued in the Alexandrine epoch, and as the hardy scholars began to erect wire nettings in the window frames fronting the landscapes of literature.

The modern science of grammar, which is based upon a mediæval edition of Alexandrine conceptions, seems to have lost none of the rigidity, fussiness and conceit of the Alexandrine epoch. We are obliged to come at Greek poetry through this medium — which did not exist when the poetry was written; but which has been developed and added to, as one of the side products of Western education. Its relation to ancient poetry and to ancient ways of feeling grows falser as time goes on. In the time of the Greek tragedians noun and verb and adjective and conjunction, as we know them, existed not. Greek adjectives are half nouns, pronouns are voices, and might easily be called so; prepositions are moody, bat-like things, and ought probably to be called moods. The verbs turn into nouns upon the slightest provocation, and the case-

endings attract and eat each other up with whimsical facility. All is done for the sentiment of the ear, nothing for rule, all is governed by a supergrammatical instinct, which the modern mind can neither practice nor understand. All the words in Greek take their meanings from each other to an extent not easily conceivable. Their wings are in motion like butterflies that will not alight. The air is full of the petals of particles for which we have no modern equivalents and which yet flutter and wheel with an inner poetry and an inimitable logic of their own. We were men before we were scholars, and therefore these things affect us like music.

The grammarian, with his immense cabinet of miniature surgical instruments, attacks this fairyland. He weaves about it a whole underworld of weird, unearthly, morbid wisdom. Grammar is a strange study which clouds the mind like opium. A language is invented, dark and technical, like mediæval law, like mediæval theology, an ontological language which moves among half-understood and awesome realities — like Dante in purgatory. It is this gloomy and fascinating tongue which the students learn — a tongue much harder than Greek,

and possessing a literature many times as large as classical Greek literature and made up entirely of grammars. This cabalistic language is ever pushed forward by the scholars.

Everything that has ever been written about the Classics has had its influence in bringing us to them. Let us accept all this steering with gratitude, and come into port. Let us shut our guidebooks, and look at the works and fragments of antiquity with all our eyes.

CHARLES ELIOT NORTON

X

CHARLES ELIOT NORTON

PROFESSOR CHARLES ELIOT NORTON was an important influence in undergraduate life when I was at Harvard; in some ways he was the most important man there. He took a personal interest in the student. You heard about Goodwin; you heard about Lane; but you knew Norton. Everyone knew him. He was an academic power of the first magnitude, a great individuality through whom the best traditions of American college life were continued. He gave to his students not only what he knew, but what he was. To do this implies greatness; and it is really by this kind of greatness that men are judged, whether they be teachers or men of action: it is this unique part of a man that makes his value. If we cast an eye back over the last half-century in America we shall not see so many great individualities that we are tempted to pass by or forget the figure of a great professor.

Our age has been an age of management, not of ideas or of men. Our problems have been problems of transportation and housing, not of thought. Our great men have been executive persons, whose merit was to serve the public convenience in practical ways. Our greatest pedagogues have generally been mere administrators. As for teaching in the mystical and personal sense — teaching in its religious and spiritual meaning — we have not had time for it. Yet there have been a few sages even in our generation. Some of them have been masters and under-masters in schools; some of them have been private persons — mere characters of eminence. Let us acknowledge our debt to these men as we should to a spirit; for through them we are united to the larger interests of humanity, and our children's heritage has passed through their devout hands.

One of these sages was Professor Norton. I would not call him a world sage, or a key to humanity at large, but a local sage, and a key to his own epoch. How well he fitted into his times may be seen in his immediate usefulness; and by the light of this hint we may study the state of culture in the America of his day. The most

From the bust by Victor B. Brenner

CHARLES ELIOT NORTON

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powerful part of his work was not that which played directly on the great public through his writings; it lay in his enormous influence over the youth who sat under him; and his image as it rises out of the past carries inspiration to professors everywhere. He was a man of much complexity of disposition, and it is impossible for anyone to give a true account of him who knew him as slightly as I did. But I will tell my impressions of him — both the earlier ones and the modifications of them which came about through time. For, as Norton grew older, the core of him began to shine through its coverings; and at the age of eighty he was plainly nothing else than a darling old saint, with a few sophistical hobbies which, when you went to see him, he drew from his cabinet and showed you with glee — old philosophical gimcracks. These things you perceived at once to be of no importance; while the man himself was everything.

In 1880 he was a man of fifty-three whose face showed immense character. He had the stoop of the student, the measured, accurate speech of the New England man of letters, a manner of speech, indeed, which betrayed all things at a clap. It betrayed

early piety, later skepticism, the interest of the amateur in the fine arts, consciousness of caste, immense force of character, and a fundamental goodness. His speech both betrayed and concealed a personal feeling of interest and kindliness, a real unselfishness and power of sacrifice which was the mainspring of his life and was the cause of its immense utility.

Yet in spite of his forthcoming quality there was in Norton something that balked. If Goethe could say of Schiller that he was like a camel, I may be permitted to say of Norton that even his greatest admirer or best friend felt in him an element of mulishness which nothing could quell or guide save the power that made him. He was not a bad mule; he was good; but you felt that he was putting his feet down somewhere and was prepared to resist. Even before you spoke you received an ultimatum.

This was merely the vestibule of Norton. Many people never got beyond this vestibule; but turned away resentfully from the polite, sardonic, patronizing smile of the host, and from the assumption that there was a sanctuary somewhere hidden within the house. They left him standing with the doorknob in his hand. Many men remem-

bered this vestibule all their lives thereafter, and could never speak peaceably of Norton. Those who pushed forward boldly, however, and came to close quarters and even to hard knocks, liked Norton. They found frankness behind his sophistication, religion behind his irreligion, and bonhomie behind his crudeness.

Norton's sense that he had a mission probably arose out of his clerical caste, and from the strong aristocratic feeling of those old Puritan first-families, who felt that they must be leaders in Israel. And he did have a mission too, though his mission was of a humbler sort than his exterior proclaimed; and his function more closely resembled that of an expert librarian than that of a Taoist priest. With regard to Norton's original piety and its transformation into a militant skepticism,— the tradition was that he had been, in his earliest years, the perfect young saint of Unitarianism; but that contact with freethinkers during a visit to England, and the loss of his young wife had upset his faith. The sense of his vocation, however, survived the change in his faith, as so often happens; and a slight hostility to Christianity thereafter tinged his mind.

These things, however, had happened in the dark ages, long before I was in College.

At the time I first knew him he was a widower, and his many children surrounded his board and filled his comfortable old mansion at Shady Hill. To this home he brought many a student for dinner or for supper with the family. There was nothing he would not do in the way of opening books, and of showing objects and inducing his children and his young guests to talk upon literature and on the topics of the day. The household itself made a happy picture, and one of Norton's passions was to fill his house with the poor and the needy. On Christmas Day he made of Shady Hill a refuge for all the students who came from such distances that they could not go home for the holidays. But Cambridge was not Norton's only home. He had a country house at Ashfield, Massachusetts, and in this community he made of himself a village sachem, a friend of the country-folk. There was held at Ashfield a yearly harvest-home feast at which he used to preside and George William Curtis and other worthies used to make speeches. It was a charming and a sincere celebration, and showed that

rarest of all phenomena in America, the relation of the man of intellect to the soil. He did these things in the aristocratic manner. Indeed, he was a grand exemplar of a dignified and ancient race. If he stopped to talk to an old neighbor in the country, it was with the graciousness of a prince; if he gave a lecture before the audience of a rural lyceum, he distributed his thoughts like largess. Behind his aristocracy of breeding, moreover, there was manhood, sincerity, good feeling,— the instinct of human solidarity.

We all know what solidarity of innate power arises out of the family feeling of class and county. Tiny nations and small cities have had it. It is the foundation of art and of character. It is the invisible arm behind the stroke of wit. It stages intellect and makes every man speak with the voice of a nation. Without this reservoir of sentiment behind and above him a man is a bag of clothes and his personality is tinsel. The constant change of habitat of men in this country, and our jumble of nationalities, is like the tossing of the Persian princes in a blanket: it makes men aliens and non-conductors; they die for lack of rest in one another.

Norton knew or felt this and he fastened himself to the ground by such anchors as he had inherited or had forged for himself. This instinct was part of the strong side of him and it coexisted, as we shall see later, with a habit of caviling at his own nation, as if he were some sort of foreign-born *macaroni*. To do this, however, is a human foible to which any man may fall a victim. I had a classmate at college who had never been far from South Boston, and one evening while dancing at the Dorchester Assembly he slipped and fell to the ground. He arose at once with great aplomb, remarking, coldly, "These cursed American floors!"

Esthetically Norton was weak; he had the stiff New England brain which (naturally) had never come in contact with the fine arts in childhood, but had learned them as a grown man learns French. He was thus in the position of a demonstrator or magician in regard to all the subjects which became the passion of his life. He handled these subjects well; he was not a part of them. Most of us occupy the same somewhat tragic relation to the plastic arts, and we have grown astute to discount our own impressions and to remember the com-

plexities of the matter. The American scholar of to-day is modest about Italy. But the pioneer American scholar who discovered the fine arts and returned to America from a North Pole expedition to Italy, where he had found them and staked them out — could not know his own limitations. It always requires a long time for a young nation to become initiated into the fine arts.

Before settling down at Harvard, Norton had not only discovered the fine arts in Italy, but he had fallen in with that brave band of Britishers who had also discovered the fine arts (especially the fifteenth century), and he became a friend of Ruskin, and of all those extremely purposeful, artistic, and literary English people — the pre-Raphaelites. It was a band or gang that he joined in England. That was the trouble with it — it was a movement. Norton stood toward this group of men in the position of a satellite — so strongly marked was the division in him between a powerful moral nature (which was never satellite to anything or to anybody) and a slightly flimsy esthetic understanding, which in early manhood had fettered him to this school.

It was probably this scholastic attitude

which offended the young and not unself-conscious student who accepted the hospitalities of Shady Hill, yet winced under the powerful preciosity of its master. There was something in all the members of the Boston Clique of Letters which at the age of twenty I deeply resented. With the exception of Holmes (for Emerson did not belong to Boston), the Boston Pundits had a pose. I rather believe that all literary sets have a pose, just as actors often have; and to persons who know the world a pose is a pardonable weakness. But the pose of the litterateur appears to the very young person to be case-hardened and supercilious. Professor Norton was particularly kind to me and often asked me to his home; and yet I did not more than half like him. If he handed you a curio or a remark, it was done with the assumption that he knew more about such things than you could ever know. He had that false relation to the things of the mind — you might call it the Platonic relation, for Plato is the greatest exponent of it — a relation which assumed that they were playthings and that he knew the game.

The man who dealt with ideas in this patronizing manner was no mere dilettante.

He was a patriot whose health had disqualified him for military service, but who had served his country throughout the war in the arduous, obscure, and useful work of the Loyal Publication Society. He was a whole-hearted man whose devotion to his friends, whose public spirit, whose rectitude and simplicity of life, ranked him with the Good Man of the Psalms and with the Staunch Citizen of Horace.

Everything that Norton did had a certain natural force in it. He belonged to the Puritan race and was first cousin to President Eliot. He shared with Eliot a pity for the poor, an extreme tenderness and goodness toward poor students. He shared with Eliot an incorruptible obtuseness as toward things unborn — things creative, poetic, and of the temperament. In fact, he was very like Eliot. He resembled Eliot in his effectiveness; and — since I have put it off till now — I must say that Norton's life-work consisted in making the unlettered, rough youth of America understand that there were such things as architecture, painting, and sculpture. Norton could do this on a grand scale, to two hundred men at once; he did it as a giant crane-shovel digs the Panama Canal. He did it with great

strokes of natural power, often with tears in his eyes, sometimes with sarcasm, sometimes dogmatically, but always successfully. More men have told me what Norton did for them in opening their understanding to the influence of art than have ever spoken to me of all the rest of Harvard's professors put together.

It was strange to see doctrine which — intellectually speaking — was a thin wash of estheticism, being ladled out like hot salvation to the hungry and shivering youth of America. Yet the sincerity on both sides was perfect, and the needs both of the giver and of the receivers of the doctrine were satisfied. It was only equality that Norton did not understand; to suppliants he was as sweet as summer.

He had another quality which combined oddly enough with his zeal. He loved to tease; he was naughty. He liked to use his skepticism in religious matters as a prod to excite conventional-minded persons; he liked to make disparaging remarks about his countrymen and about their all-too-obvious deficiencies. The enjoyment of a notoriety which came out of these smart sayings and old-maidish whimsicalities of opinion must be classed as a weakness in Norton; but it

must also be classed as a trifle. His social contemporaries were apt to have a sneer for him, because from his early youth he had gone his own gait and followed the bent of his own character and talents. The most famous of these jibes deserves to be recorded for its own sake. A college-mate of Norton's while traveling in Italy wrote home to a friend, "At Florence I ran across Charles Norton — sowing his *tame oats.*" It seems to me now that the idiosyncrasies of such a man (especially in America) are in themselves a blessing to his generation; or, at any rate, that all of Norton's foibles were as nothing compared with his merits. In England and France people take pride in the mental nodosities of their great men; people know that character and eccentricity go together. At the time I first knew him Norton was often designedly irritating; and it required more philosophy than most Americans are masters of to forgive him for his sallies.

As for Norton's yeoman's work in translating Dante, in writing memoirs of his friends, in editing letters, in providing prefaces for many kinds of works, in being an accurate scholar and faithful slave to good literature, I think no one can deny that his

times are in debt to him. He was one of our best men in those fields of work. Here, too, in editing and writing (as in teaching), he had a genius for utility. He regarded himself as a useful drudge, and up to his very last hours he was engaged in serving the cause of sound scholarship to the utmost of his power.

During his last years he lost all his acidity and he retained all his affectionateness. He must have found out that his earlier exclusiveness and pose of cultivation were not worth keeping up, for they dropped from off him, and left him rosy. He was a beaming little old gentleman with a note as sweet as an eighteenth-century organ — such an organ as you find in the hallway of an English country house — mellow, gentle, and touching in the extreme. He remembered his scholars and welcomed them back; he always made time to see them, and he really became beautiful as a picture and a presence. Happy are they who have him to look back upon in their lives.

One of Professor Norton's latest labors was the preparation of that series of Heart of Oak Readers for school children which have made the work of the schoolmaster easy. This graduated series of readers re-

minds one by its perfection of those French text books containing *morceau choisis,* in which the talent and industry of a lifetime and the extended range of a learned man's mind have been employed in choosing extracts for children to study. You think you are reading a book of stray passages; yet so subtly are the pieces chosen for their historic interest, for their emotional appeal, for their poetic merit, that you are really being played upon at first hand by master minds of literature.

Men's characters come to us from their graves. For life is dazzling and complex: we cannot grasp it, we never understand the heart-in-action. But when the heart has stopped beating forever we turn to the lamp and the manuscript. Some artist pulls aside a curtain and shows us the man. He becomes better known to posterity than he was to his intimate friends. If we could know the living as we know the dead, and meet them in that realm of the intellect in which we find their pictures, memoirs and souls' histories, human intercourse would be tinged with perpetual romance. I can, for instance, at this moment, feel how Norton in his later years would have been amused at the descriptions of his more crabbed period.

He would have laughed at the tale of his own foibles. Nay further, it is plain that upon very little provocation he would have laughed at himself at any time during his life. Thus in taking a telescopic view backward through a man's whole life, we may catch for a moment, a glimpse of what no one could guess who saw only a part. At the time events are happening they are dumb; and refuse to give up their meaning. But afterwards they begin to give out thoughts and half-thoughts in flashes.

How impossible is it to predict which of two young men has the main talent—which of them will end by establishing himself and forcing his times to accept him. The greatest talent of all is a talent for life; and this often lies hidden under a mound of golden inertia, or of frivolity and incompetence, and is brought to the surface by those slow upheavals which run through the world and bring the slow men to the top. When I look at a row of little boys I often wonder which one of them it is who is hiddenly in touch with the enduring powers of the world, and how they will each look forty years later. There seems to exist no key to these enigmas. The dunces of genius and the real dunces look very much alike; and

boys of brilliant promise cannot be prophetically classified.

Professor Norton was certainly a man of long wind and endurance; and he lived to impress himself and establish himself, to survive and continue till he appeared to be one of the chariot-wheels of society, and his whole life seems like a triumph.

ETHICAL CULTURE

XI

ETHICAL CULTURE[1]

AMONG all the changes of creeds and of customs, there are in any society always two types of men. There is the man of good conduct, whose life illustrates moral truth, and there is the religious person who consciously experiences moral truth. Even in ancient Egypt or in ancient Rome these types must have existed — the ethical person and the religious person. And if we were forced to choose between them we should prefer the man of conduct to the man of feeling. We reverence the good man who is not interested in religion more than the religious person who is not good; and in so doing we cast a doubt upon all dogmatic formulations of truth. There is

[1] This address was delivered in a course (before the Ethical Culture Society in New York) where each lecturer assigned some book to be read in connection with the lecture. The New Testament was the book recommended.

something in religion which can only be expressed through conduct. This is the reason for parables, which are mere pictures of conduct, and leave the mysteries of faith unsolved. We may consider ethics as life in the round, or as religion in practice. The distinction is convenient, but not ultimate. It is easy to see that ethical conduct must somehow be a form of religion. Any statement of ethical truth comes into competition with religion. Your Ethical Society, for instance, treads on the toes of the churches. The teaching that goes on in this building is, in a sense, religious teaching. By calling it ethical you do not prevent it from being a branch and form of religion.

Ethics is separated from religion very much as the churches are separated from one another — by wavy lines of prejudice and education. It is with these lines that we have to do. It is they that rule our philosophy; I do not say that they rule our lives so much as they rule our statements. There is a realm of discussion, and it is in this realm of dissension that words become important. Words are powers — like water power and electricity; and we find them running and circulating about the

world with natures and meanings of their own which we cannot control. History has determined the matter and has bound us up as with chains in the meanings of these creatures, words. For instance, anyone to-day who uses the word *God* is talking Hebrew, not the Hebrew of Palestine, but that Hebrew of modern accent, with two thousand years of Western Christianity in its voice. You cannot wash the significance out of the word nor cast another meaning upon it, though you speak with the tongue of genius. The quandary of the scholar becomes very apparent when he translates the Greek and Roman classics. In this case the modern writer has difficulty in attributing to the pagan gods the right kind of divinity. When he uses the God with a capital G in depicting classic mythology, he not only gives us a qualm on behalf of Jehovah, but he does a refined kind of violence to the pagan myth. He owes two apologies.

Symbols mean so much, and become so identified with particular causes that we fear to use them. The thing we are afraid of is lest *they* shall use *us*. Every man I meet is afraid of a different kind of a surplice. Some dread gestures, as implying they know not what of dogma or claim. To bow at

the creed or not to bow gives equally sincere shivers to opposing classes of persons, who in dress, food, and moral code are indistinguishable. How explain these labyrinthine antipathies, this deadly war of masonic signs and murderous shibboleths? Each one of them must for explanation be looked up historically. Each one of them has a most simple explanation — an explanation *in fact*. Some disagreeable episode is at the back of each and every ebullition of sentiment. These rancors are the fumes of old controversy. We are still carrying on the animosities of the wars of religion. The Reformation is still in progress. The smell of incense continues for generation after generation to arouse the strongest animosities known to human nature. The Gothic Church may crumble, but the sentiment of hostility to all it once typified endures. So also the counter sentiment of attachment to it and hatred of the Reformer endure. If I am a Roman Catholic I may not sing "Lead, kindly Light" till *after* Newman's conversion. To do so might imply something that I do not mean. Thus are we all slaves to formula, and slaves to the fear of formula — slaves as it were to history.

Thoughts like these passed through my mind as I left this building the last time I was in it. The occasion was about a year ago. I had come here to attend a lecture of one of your foremost teachers — one of the pillars of the Ethical Society, and one of the most notable saints in the city. This man was lecturing to young men on Epictetus. It was a strange academy — a kind of mad tea-party. The students were most of them muscular young Hebrews, with an immense reverence for their instructor's character and a marked skepticism as to his modes of reasoning. Not one in the room — myself least of all — knew anything about Epictetus. The system of instruction was as follows: — The master read a few sentences out of Epictetus, and then asked a question of the nearest Hebrew. If the teacher did not like the answer he received — and he never did like it — he flung the young Hercules to the ground and pounded his head with the volume till the boy cried for mercy. Then he patted the boy's shoulder, gave him an affectionate hug, the protagonists took their places again, and the séance was resumed. At times the contagion of argument spread, and the whole class fell upon the floor in

mêlée, while Epictetus scored a touch-down. At the end of the lesson we were not fatigued, but exhilarated. It was good to have been there. These boys went home stirred and filled with vitality. I understood why it was that the Ethical Society was one of the religious bodies which constantly sends forth young men into practical reform work.

During the *conférence* I kept muttering to myself from time to time, "Why Epictetus?" You see I was trying to fix my mind on Epictetus and to remember who he was. Of course some word was mentioned now and then about morality and religion, duty, service, and so forth; but I could not seize or identify these flying thoughts. I knew that I had read about all these things somewhere before, but I could not remember where it was. At last my eye caught sight of a small gray volume, which did not look like a book, but like — like an object, a clothes-brush perhaps. It was a little hotel Bible, which was part of the furniture of the room, but which had not been noticed or mentioned during the proceedings. It seemed to be shrinking and fading away. I picked it up. It was quite illegible and had never been legible. No wonder the vol-

ume had never been opened. Yet it was there — a Bible. There in that little wizened package lay the great Hebrew mind, the only mind that is worthy to be called mind at all, so far as Ethics goes, the fountain of all enduring ethical thought, the source of all enduring ethical power. There lay the A B C of Western religion, if one desired the historic view; there the symbols of living ethical faith — that faith which is the nearest one we could reach if we threw a stone out of the window. I am speaking of the whole Bible, the Hebrew contribution to the world, the Old and New Testaments as a single body of thought. For the philosophic content and the mode of looking at life is the same in all parts of Jewish literature. It is impossible to understand the New Testament except through the Old, and *vice versa*.

In the class-rooms of the Ethical Society the Bible seemed to be a thing aloof — perhaps a delicate subject. Why was this? Because Christ was rejected by the Jews two thousand years ago, and because Christ said many things that people have since disagreed about. The prejudices of the Ethical Society are easily explained. It was founded in the nineteenth century,

chiefly by Hebrews, and in order to rescue ethical truth from the clutches of dogma — the dogmas of Western Christianity and Western Judaism. The clouds that hung about its birth trouble the manhood of the Society. The same thing is true of the Protestant Episcopal Church. The same thing is true of all churches and of all institutions: their origins limit their influence. Their origins live along with them and cramp their mind.

The Ethical Society was to have been pure intellect, and lo, it is almost as full of prejudices as the next religious body. This is no one's fault; it is a process in human affairs.

I will tell you another anecdote which illustrates the reverse action of Ethical force, that is to say, it illustrates how benevolence is able to make use of all sorts of creeds, races, and dogmas without causing any trouble. The story is also about Jews. A very important Hebrew in Chicago, a man of great benevolence and vast wealth, wanted to help the Southern negroes. He got the negro question on the brain. He found by consulting with the best authorities that the most valuable thing he could do for the negroes was to raise the char-

acter of the white men at the South. One way of doing this was through the Y.M.C.A. So then this Hebrew of the Hebrews subscribes enormous sums to found white Christian Associations (from which negroes are excluded) as his best way of reaching negro conditions. It required the discovery of America to provide a field which should show up phenomena of this kind. The real forces of goodness and badness run right through every person and every institution, and the notion of segregating truth into churches, schools, and theories is becoming visibly more absurd as the years go by.

There is no doubt that humanity is held apart by dogmas and statements of truth, by attempts to define truth. Humanity is drawn together by warm-hearted conduct. And yet the conduct we approve often rests upon dogmas which we do not approve. The dogmas then are as important as the conduct. While reasoned and sensible statements of Ethical truth seem well enough for a certain class of minds, there are great realms of power where Ethics does not run. Nay, if you examine closely you will find that these sensible statements are always criticisms and qualified accept-

ances of religious truth. They are finger-posts pointing to religion.

Moral truth is born in the form of religion. Afterwards comes ethical theory and rakes in the ashes for precepts. You cannot run the Salvation Army upon Ethical statements, nor abolish Slavery through Ethical Culture. The movement would have to be heated and vaporized into steam power before its blows would tell. In the process God would be discovered. Pure Ethics has a weak voice. She has no poets of high rank, no prophets with heart-cleaving words. She is a handmaid, a note at the bottom of another's text. Ethics has a weak voice, it is true, and has said little of importance to humanity or about humanity; but she has a strong hand and has done much for humanity. She sometimes saves the fragments where theologies clash and hope to destroy one another. But let me tell you my belief. Without Theology she would perish, for Ethics is a feeble plant, hardly self-perpetuating. Ethics must draw constant life from religion — and ever new life from new religion, or it becomes a husk, and humanity discards it.

If these things are true, then your Ethical Society must live by becoming to some

extent a Theological Institute. Nay, it is one already. Your programme this winter shows eighteen meetings of which the subjects have been announced. Ten concern Robert Browning; one is on Dante. Now Browning and Dante are pure Theology. Thus Ethical theory camps out on the abandoned farms of Theology.

The thing I would say to you young people is this: Pursue the road you are in. Follow the stream to its source. Read Browning and Dante and Milton and then go to the source of them, which is the New Testament, and read that. Read it not merely for Ethics, but unreservedly for all that comes out of it. If Theology comes to you out of it — and it will — accept it, and have no fear of it. The fear men have of Theology is due to the political abuses of the past. We go on trembling at the robe, after the tyrant is dead. Some people fear candles on an altar. There is no harm in candles. If you light candles each one of you on the altar of his own heart, there will be more light in the world.

Those dim poets, Dante and Browning, shed a light and show a sort of beam out of the infinite; but you must be a beam in yourself, and not fear the glow and heat

that may come from a deeper understanding of life — when it begins to reach you from behind the poets.

There has recently been an age of agnosticism: it is closing. An age of faith is in progress. The Desert of Agnosticism has been crossed; and some of those leaders who helped multitudes to pass across it, were destined not to enter the promised land themselves. Such men are ever among the greatest of their generation. I am thinking of William James, who was in himself more than he either saw or thought. At the time he was writing I saw in him only the ineffectual thinker, but later I came to see in him the saint. The fear with which his mind was tinctured was the very vice of which I should accuse the Ethical Society — a fear of the symbols of religion. His heart had been a little seared by early terror. The intellectual part of him was enfeebled by the agnosticism of 1870. And yet what difference did it make? Some sort of light shone out of his cloud as he took his way across the sands, and men followed him. I speak of him here, because his life is a type of mystery. He is there before us, but he can no more be grasped than a phantom.

We also, in like manner, are mysteries, and our words, deeds, and notions are merely phantoms. Behind each one there is something which others see better than the man himself sees. The controlling element in our lives is unknown to us. All our language is personal; we cannot hand our faith to another. This has always been true. Even in the Middle Ages when faith was theoretically uniform it was always practically individual. Every mind has a law of its own. The idiom of it is formed slowly in each one of us and must be waited for patiently. You must not accept another man's terms of thought or sacrifice the integrity of your mind at any time. It may be that you are not destined to experience religion. Very well, accept this destiny; acceptance is the beginning as it is the end of religion. We must each walk our own path and move in that direction where glimmers the dawn — or what looks like the dawn leaving the rationale of our conduct to the outcome. By following our inner feeling, no matter how quaintly it may express itself, or how remote it may seem from the usual modes of expression, we shall set ourselves on the road towards the great discoveries. I say, accept your

powerlessness and accept your peculiarities. There was no one ever exactly like you. No wonder, then, that other people's statements mean little to you. Those statements may hereafter come to mean something, by looming up behind the things that have been revealed to you through your own conduct. All the great temples have been dedicated to this same inner God, and have been builded in this silence. The secret of the heart — a thing personal and intimate — being expressed, stated perhaps with diffidence, turns out to be the great lamp of truth, an axis on which human life turns, and has ever turned.

The New Testament is the Thesaurus of sacred wisdom compared to which there is no book or monument that deserves to be named. It is a personal record and contains things — one might say — almost too personal to be published. Of this nature is its importance, and from this source — neither from Church nor from commentator — flows its power.

PRESIDENT ELIOT

XII

PRESIDENT ELIOT

For half a century President Eliot was one of the great personal figures in American life. He was known to every man in America and to many people in Europe. Everyone has an interest in such a character; especially in America, where men are too much alike and great individuals are a rarity. Every one of us bears a relation of some sort to any great character who has lived in the immediate past. This must be my excuse for setting down a few remarks and hair-brained reminiscences which recall President Eliot to my mind. Many of them are, perhaps, links in my own history rather than in his.

There is another good reason for writing about Eliot. He was not a political figure, nor an artist, nor a thinker: he was the embodiment of a mood of the American people, a sincere, important, and yet passing mood: and he belongs to a class of men who

fill a great place in the public eye and are suddenly and ungratefully forgotten;— the class of worthies. Twenty-five years from now, young men will be shamelessly asking, "Who was President Eliot?" And therefore many monographs and sketches of him ought to be written at once.

Eliot's prominence is connected with the rise of the new education, that system or that blind battling for light, which began in America during the seventies, when the opinion prevailed that the commercial growth of the United States,— our growth in population and in wealth,— compelled the pulling down of the old buildings and old curricula, and the making of all things anew. I have heard William James say, "Yes, yes, we must have large things first, size first; the rest will come." This was the unspoken philosophy, the inner compelling, dumb thought of the epoch; and Eliot, when he was chosen President of Harvard in 1870, dedicated his life to the idea. He was shouldering, as it turned out, not only Harvard College but the higher education of the whole country. Before his day no one used to ask who was President of Harvard University. At the close of his day the President of Harvard

was a national figure, and the Presidents of all the other Colleges in the country were persons to be reckoned with. Let us not, however, credit too much to any one man. Transformations in the popular imagination use men, choose figure-heads, subdue individuals to their will. Eliot was the nonpareil schoolmaster to his age,— an age that worshiped the schoolmaster and clung to him. The recent rise of Woodrow Wilson in political life is connected with the same deep educational impulse.

I will begin by recalling a few of the social conditions in Cambridge thirty years ago; for while such matters seem to be superficial, they really result from causes that are deep and old, causes of national significance.

In my undergraduate days (1880-1884) there was a tacit understanding at Harvard that social intercourse between the faculty and the students was bad form. Louis Dyer was at that time a young assistant professor, and he had either been to Oxford, or else he had read about Oxford. He held the belief that it was well for the boys to meet the tutors and professors; and he used to give smoking-parties in his room and to make himself personally agreeable to the

students. The boys thought this a clumsy sort of joke, and the College authorities thought it — I don't know what — but they soon stamped him out; and he went abroad and afterwards lived for many years in Oxford, beloved by all, surrounded by the academic atmosphere which he had once foolishly tried to improvise at Harvard. I have often thought of Dyer, and of his gentleness, and of the way he blew the cigarette smoke out of his nose. He was a little like one of those mild mythological animals in "Alice in Wonderland," sweet as summer, and, as it were, harmless,— in fact, a creature that presented a strange contrast to the cynical professors and the brute students at Harvard College. He faded away with his charming grin and, by good luck, I saw him again at Oxford twenty-five years later, a few weeks before his death. Louis Dyer represented the "false dawn" of the social idea at Harvard. This idea was vigorously carried out by the authorities a few years later when they made the discovery that something was wrong at Harvard, that nobody loved anybody there, and that the thing to do was to give weekly teas at Brook's Hall, to ask everyone, to get ladies from Boston, Bishops from anywhere,

social people at any cost, social talent to bridge the gulf between instructors and instructed. Nobly they labored. It was shoulder-to-shoulder, never say die, love one love all, more tea, more ladies. The whole movement was sincere in the extreme; it was a real dawn, somewhat grotesque and naïve,— (as if Phœbus should take down the shutters, and Aurora bang the doors open and proclaim the day;) but Harvard has been a more human place ever since. Indeed, what Harvard truly needed was the outside world,— ladies, Bishops and tea. Perhaps all institutions need these same things.

There was one comic element about this social revival at Harvard,— viz., the flying-wedge endeavor to make out that President Eliot had been Phœbus all along, and was standing effulgent with social love in his heart, loving the boys, encouraging the professors, shedding influence. Now as a matter of fact, President Eliot was the spiritual father of the glacial era theretofore in progress, he was the figure-head of those previous dreadful times; and I have sometimes stopped to shake hands with him because I thought it was right; — and also, I confess, because I thought it would cause

him pain. Such is the silliness of the undergraduate mind. The trustees, the ladies, bishops and steerers of Harvard, having received new warmth themselves from what Milton calls the "mellowing year," got at President Eliot and thawed him out. They told him he was the best fellow in the world, they told the world that he had a heart of gold and was a misunderstood person; — and the thing was done. President Eliot responded to the treatment; he glowed, he beamed. He really did have a warm place in him, and they moved this round in front where people could see it and feel it; and, by Jove, the New Legend was launched.

There was something in this legend, too. Besides the warmth that comes from success and from middle-life, there had always been more geniality in Eliot than most people supposed. If the same process of incaloration that Eliot received from his friends could have been applied to Emerson, to Hawthorne, and to James Russell Lowell, they would have glowed also. Indeed, while Lowell was in England where he was properly petted, he grew forthcoming and hearty,— qualities he soon lost upon returning to America and experienc-

ing the formal and reverential manners of his compatriots. I make no doubt that George Ticknor, Robert C. Winthrop, John Quincy Adams, yes, Edward Everett himself would have turned a rosy hue and put forth green branches if they could have been x-rayed with warm social feeling, coming from a hot source of divine love. But such a thing was not known in their day. I have an instinctive suspicion that it was Alice Freeman Palmer who introduced this elemental heat into Boston in the late eighties, but upon this subject I am imperfectly informed.

The Doctor Eliot who first swam into my undergraduate ken as the martinet who stalked across the yard, and who was traditionally regarded as an important, hostile, and sinister influence,— a sort of Dickens-like haunted-man,— was a very remarkable person. His voice was remarkable,— a low vibrant, controlled, melodious voice that seemed to have so much reverence in it, the voice, you would say, of a cultivated man. And yet President Eliot had not the point of view of a cultivated man, nor had he reverence for cultivation *per se*. He regarded cultivation somewhat as Michael Angelo regarded the painting of the Vene-

tian school,— as a thing fit for women. Life was greater than culture. No ideals except ideals of conduct had reality for him. Literature and philosophy and *all that* were the names of things in bottles to him. I'm not sure that there was not in him a touch of jealousy, a Puritan dread of the Humanities. With this was combined a truly unique pity for poverty in any student, and a truly pious belief in education as a means of self-advancement. And let us pause here to note that in all this Eliot was a sincere, spontaneous representative of the average American. By some accident which separated him from his own class,— for New England possessed many men with the old-fashioned feeling for the Humanities,— he became representative of the country at large.

If there was about Doctor Eliot an absence of cultivation, there was the presence of force. The voice was force; its vibrations were the vibrations of force. The modulations of it were modulations of force, the melody was the melody of force. Behind it there was a two-handed engine of human pertinacity, an intellect very accurately limited and a genius for the understanding of men.

I will give an instance of his clairvoyance in matters of character. When I was halfway through college my family lost money. I was on the verge of leaving Harvard. News of the situation somehow reached Eliot, and he sent for me and offered me tutoring. It appeared that a certain young loafer (whom I will not name, as he became through the incident and has remained ever since, a valued friend) required the services of a mental puncher of some sort to force him to work. It must be remembered that I did not belong to the working classes in college; and never dreamed of tutoring anyone. I really was not competent to do proper tutoring. But this kind of a boosting job was within my powers. I had not known that it was within my powers, but Doctor Eliot knew it; and I did such wonders with my young renegade, and he gained such unheard-of marks in the ensuing examinations, that both he and I have lived on the memory of those intellectual triumphs ever since. At the time I speak of there must have been a thousand undergraduates in the academic department, and Doctor Eliot had the reputation of not knowing one man from another. This anecdote is one out of hundreds. In every

walk of life, in all his dealings with men, Doctor Eliot was doing such things every day. His greatness lay in his handling of men.

He had his policies, which, as I conceive, were to make Harvard large and well-known. Besides this matter he had his "Elective System," which I have never understood, but which seems to have been a corollary from the axiom "size first." It was imagined that a university must be a place where everything was taught, and that all sorts of departments ought to be opened at once. It was perfectly natural that America, looking at Germany, and bent upon swallowing the whole of learning at one gulp, should invent some sort of great fair, where the students were to come and take their fill, following their own election under some sort of supervision. The thing which nobody seems to have thought of was the relation which any foreign University bears to the average literacy of the country it serves. Perhaps our pedagogues neglected this consideration with their eyes open. They conceived that a University need provide opportunities merely, and that the students would do the rest. Now in Germany, where every student is already a

highly educated person, who knows what he wants and knows how to work, such a system is admirable. But in America, where the boys come up to college with broken sets of rudimentary reminiscence, and without knowing what they want or how to get it, the great need in any University is the need of good teaching. We have found this out since those days; and we have discovered it largely through the strong-handed, logical power with which Harvard pursued the other path and took the consequences. So, also, in the endeavor to introduce research work, and to put a premium on the original thesis, it was surely natural to imitate Germany, and to forget that not even the immensely high average of general education among the Germans is sufficient to prevent much of their research work from being a stench in the nostrils,— an agony under the long-suffering moon. A special thesis should be the work of a ripe scholar,— if possible of a man who also knows the world. But ought we to set a man to making original researches in anthropology and Hindu-metaphysics when he has had no experience of life and only a class-room knowledge of books?

Eliot's greatness, however, lay not in his conceptions,— which were simple enough, and sometimes, as many have thought, mistaken; but in his power to carry them through. The circumstances required the construction of a one-man machine. It may be remarked parenthetically that all rapid changes in society come about through the creation of a one-man machine. This is the only way in which executive business on a large scale can be done quickly. A true University, on the other hand, can never rest upon the will of one man. A true University always rests upon the wills of many divergent-minded old gentlemen, who refuse to be disturbed, but who growl in their kennels. Now Eliot was a servant of his age, and his age commissioned him to refashion Harvard within a lifetime.

Administrative talent means the power to serve unseen masters, to know by instinct what can be done and to do it, to weigh opponents, thwarting some, conciliating others; deceiving some, destroying others. And all the while in the background of the great administrator's mind lie the great forces which he is really serving,— the political forces, the millions of clients, the

practical world of his day. A thinker may reach mankind through his books: he may live in ideas which are realized only in a later generation or are never realized at all. He is bound to his age by no ties except metaphysical ties. But an administrator, however able, can accomplish only that which the work-a-day world of his day will permit him to accomplish. If he tries to do more he will be turned out of office. In the case of Doctor Eliot the subjection of the administrator to his age was especially apparent; for Eliot's first great need was a need of money; and money could only come from State Street and from Wall Street, and could only be expended in ways which the business men of America approved. The money question is the key to Doctor Eliot's career, merely because it is the key to his epoch. His very extraordinary nature could, I believe, have ruled a seventeenth-century theocracy. He cared nothing for money; he cared merely for power. But power in the United States between 1870-1910 meant money power: therefore Eliot's nature took on a financial hue.

I remember being surprised and a little shocked at the first speech I ever heard from him. It was, I think, at a great Harvard

function in Memorial Hall, perhaps in connection with the 250th Anniversary of the College. Eliot seemed to dwell upon nothing but money. Figures were in every climax; not figures of speech, but Arabic, decimal symbols of value. And his words were music to the audience; every statement was greeted with applause. I came to reflect afterwards that it was only by such music as this that the wine could be drawn from the cask. Eliot in his financial rhapsodies drew golden tears down Pluto's cheek, and he built his College. The music was crude: it was not Apollo's lute: it was the hurdy-gurdy of pig-iron and the stock yards. To this music rose the walls of Harvard, and of all our Colleges,— our solemn temples, theaters, clinics, dormitories, museums. So also of the somewhat Corybantic advertising that Eliot inaugurated and which still continues in milder form, the clubs, parades, intelligence offices and boat rides, the Harvard Brigade that beats up trade for the College,— foolish would be the man who should blame any individual for these things (as I have often done). They are the symbols of contemporary America,— inevitable, necessary, the por-

tals of the future. As for Eliot's share in all of them, all one can say is, "What wonderful manipulation of an era, what masterly politics!" If you find in Pindar's odes the intimate longings of the Greek nature, you will find in Eliot's reports the throb of the American heart; you will find in his propaganda the genius of the American people of his epoch. These are the reasons why Eliot became one of the great figureheads of the age.

One can never really explain a man, or track talent to its lair; and all attempts to do so are works of the imagination. No one can follow the currents of influence that run between a man and his antagonists, or between a man and his followers. All that we ever really do in such cases is to state the problem. I have always been surprised at the influence exercised by Eliot over his contemporaries, some of whom seemed to be his equals in moral force and his superiors in power of thinking. They regarded him as divinely commissioned, and they stood aside. They withheld their judgment in a manner which I thought almost immoral; but I see now that this was merely a phenomenon of the epoch.

These men adored Eliot; to them he was great and good and magnanimous,— a being superior to themselves.

Such an ascendency was not gained in a moment, but grew up during many years, and resulted from many different qualities in Doctor Eliot. It was accomplished by the glamour of his personality, by the general belief in his righteousness, and in his humility, by his appeal to ethnic loyalty (Harvard and New England), and most of all, it was accomplished through the fact that Eliot was a man of destiny and these other men were inquirers. There were, of course, quarrels in the camp of Harvard; there was opposition; there was hostility as deep as life on the part of many strong personalities. But there never was a death-grapple (I mean defiance, resignations, pamphlets), between Eliot and a man of the first rank. Those whom he could not control, he side-shunted in some way that left them harmless. The men of the first rank he hypnotized. To be sure, they didn't quite know, as we do to-day, what was happening, and what conditions would be left behind; *but they would have let him do anything.* I have listened to some of these men in open-mouthed wonder when they

expounded their views on President Eliot. The aged Emerson was one of Eliot's admirers. They put Emerson on the Board of Trustees of Harvard and he used to wander about Cambridge casting his innocent benediction upon the work of reorganization. "But why, but why," asks the casual observer, "do I detect a note of disapproval in this description of what was happening at Harvard?" In order to answer this question one must recur to general ideas. A college is the home of scholastic influence, and scholasticism means leisure. Leisure is a plant of slow growth, hard to domesticate in any hurried, new and commercial society. Cultivated men are men of whims and tastes, of enthusiasms and of special talents. Cultivation cannot be dragooned. It must be humored. The little sprouts and spears of true university life that had slowly and painfully taken root about Harvard Square during two hundred years, were destroyed at the behest of our great ignorant National Board of Improvements. It was heart-rending, but inevitable. If Eliot had not done it, the age would have found a man that would. The way this system works in crushing talent is somewhat as follows:—

Let us suppose that there is, in a certain University, a young instructor of promise in the field of English literature. Shall he be advanced? Of course he shall. But it appears that he has opinions with regard to the new gymnasium that are opposed to the views of the Control. He can write and speak: he is a forcible person. How then can we advance him? His advancement would put our whole administration in jeopardy. On the contrary, let him understand that in this college there is no future for him; then he will quickly depart and leave us to carry on our important projects. Can we leave an ivy-mantled tower in the midst of our New Boulevard? This is the way that progress looks upon cultivation. It is a strange thing how vice always strikes at the heart. Not only vice, but mere error works a blight: some policy which seems harmless, or seems to be mistaken in only one of its aspects, turns out to involve death-doing consequences. Sometimes a lack of tact — or what seems a mere lack of tact — comes between a character and its destiny; or a man dies from a cold in the head. So this harmless-seeming error in the choice of young pro-

fessors did, in fact, generate a poison which deadened the whole of education.

What is the most important thing in education? It is the relation between teacher and pupil. Here is the focus of the whole matter; this tiny crucible must boil, or your whole College will be cold. The Business Era chilled this heart-center of University life in America; because, during this Era, natural law operated to bring the youngest scholars under the control of unenthusiastic instructors. Persons of individual power were the very ones who were discharged. Thus the instructors,—without anyone's being aware of it,—were being picked out *because of* their unenthusiasm. So terrible is natural law.

There is, however, a truer and more awful aspect of the matter. The system stamped out private mind in our colleges. It attacked the soul of the individual instructor through its control over his livelihood. This is the great historic crime of the world, the crime of churches, empires, tyrannies; and it has been the great crime of our commercial epoch in America. It has been a successful crime and it has impoverished the intellect and chilled the char-

acter of our teaching classes for a generation.

Let us return to Doctor Eliot. Every generation is a secret society, and has incommunicable enthusiasms, tastes and interests which are a mystery both to its predecessors and to posterity. There is a Zeitgheist at the bottom of all hero-worship. Heroes are created by the puffing up of faith out of the soil,— a spontaneous exhalation from contemporary, spiritual conditions. The essence of hero-worship seems to be this: — the worshiper is convinced that what the hero is about to do is *for the best:* the worshiper backs and indorses his champion by instinct and before the act. A slight paralysis of the judgment in the worshiper is what creates the situation. How this paralysis arises it is impossible to say; but anyone who has ever felt the joy of even a momentary paralysis of the judgment,— of even a momentary belief in any hero,— can understand the rise of all heroes. The pleasure that lives in the spontaneous act of worship brings the hero into existence. Those men who evoke such worship must be allowed their special rank. This does not mean, however, that these men will permanently interest the world. The only

thing it certainly proves in them is an inordinate and tremendous vitality.

Everything about Eliot was vital. His wonderful low voice, his benignant smile, a smile that was assured, well-poised and habitual, could not be forgotten. To talk with him was to be played upon by a fountain of genial force. It was not quite natural force. Perhaps you felt just a touch of *control,* as if you were being drawn in somewhere. Perhaps you questioned "Why this benevolence?" or feared he might be crediting you with almost too much assent to his own view of the world; — as a very motherly nurse might smile on a new-born babe with rather more approval than the child thought was called for by the circumstances. Yet the principal experience was one of pleasure. As for the general impression you had in your mind, when you thought of Eliot's position in the world of Boston; — a little nimbus of glory always seemed to enclose him. He was the victim of a general apotheosis. He was really a king of men in his generation.

It was interesting to see a man so distinctly of the past as Eliot was, both in externals and in internals, take the lead in the nineteenth century. He had the formality

of manner which belonged to 1820,— the formality of the man who never was young, but must have been a precisian in his earliest days. He had the temperament of the ecclesiastic, of the Archbishop, the missionary, the General of an Order. What is it that such men accomplish? They unify, they spread a standard. They are great yeomen, who brand wild cattle and build fences. The savage, terrible hordes of America waked up in 1870, to the importance of salvation by education. Perhaps they valued education too highly, and in their ignorance demanded more than even education can give. Yet these hordes were ingenuous in their desire to be saved. As the Frankish tribes in the sixth century submitted to Rome, so the Americans in the nineteenth submitted to Massachusetts. The creatures were received and taxed, schooled and attended to. Some lowering of old standards, some loss of cultivation (let us hope only temporary), ensued as a matter of course. Yet the whole process was important, significant, big with influence upon the future. The Pope during this epoch was Charles William Eliot.

It is hard to get far enough away from the canvas to take any general view of such

a subject as education. Education means everything.

I remember the expectations with which I entered College, the vistas of Classical reading, of historical discussion, of scientific thought that rose in my mind when I thought of Harvard. I supposed that all of this delightful exploration into the universe would go forward accompanied by the genial assistance of elder people and by the joyous emulation of younger ones. Not school hours and recitations, but afternoon walks, suppers and excursions, conversation and experimental essay, the critique, the daring paraphrase, lived in my mind as the probable stage-settings and vehicles of academic education. I suppose I had read about such things in books and memoirs. After the first cold douche and shock of arrival in Harvard College was past, however, I became as hardened as the rest. By the time I came to know Louis Dyer he seemed to me to be a quixotic person. Just as your nicely-brought-up little boy comes back out of the street and utters vulgar bombast in the drawing room, so did I adopt the tone of Harvard College and patronize (I remember the feeling), yes, patronize this excellent gentleman, Louis

Dyer, who was trying to recall me to my own tastes and beliefs.

The ladies'-tea era and the young men's Christian era, which I have mentioned, did not come into blossom while I was an undergraduate, but a few years later, and as a reaction from the awful bleakness that was just setting in in my day. No one can deny the wholesomeness of this drawing-room movement, yet no one can doubt its inadequacy. Young college men can get a great deal from drawing rooms and from tea, and from bishops; but their real social needs are best supplied by hard-thinking, highly-educated men, not too much older than themselves, who live and work and think with them. Such men impart their ideals, their knowledge, their benevolence, to the students in the very act and process of college life and work. The sudden discovery by certain philanthropists that the social side of education was all but extinct at Harvard, led to the formation of brigades and brotherhoods whose members went out and brought in the half-frozen students, much as the Salvation Army sends out persons with stretchers to bring in the victims of alcoholism.

The times called for such emergency

work, and perhaps some deep instinct told the educators that if they should direct their steps straight toward Humanity, they would find the humanities.

In recent years it has been discovered on all hands that what our colleges need is "inspired teachers." Harvard gave a prize to an essay on this subject not long ago. But how to find such teachers is the question. They cannot be ordered by the gross from the factory. They must be discovered, one by one, and brought home from the woods and swamps, like orchids. They must be placed in a conservatory, not in a carpenter-shop; and they must be honored and trusted. They must be allowed to teach their own subjects in their own ways, and to hold and express private opinions about University management. Such men can never be introduced into our colleges except through a widespread "inspiration" on the part of everyone in the country as to what education means. I think I see a College president of the old style, after he has obtained a finely recommended, young, "inspiring" teacher, and has discovered that the teacher's "inspiration" slops over into practical matters, and affects College management. The president would

regard himself as false to his trust unless he took immediate steps to restrict, curtail and qualify that young man's inspirations. No, no! There will be no volcanic change in university conditions in America. The elements that control the situation are elements which change very slowly. The American people must come to value learning for its own sake before we can hope for scholars as the managers of our education.

When a Museum of Fine Arts is founded in a Western city it is at first managed by business men, because there are no experts at hand. As time goes on, however, trained scholars and competent persons are gradually found, to whom the institution is entrusted for management. This illustration may give us an allegory of the whole recent history of American education. Business men have run the colleges because business was predominant. The time is coming when our colleges will be run by scholars because the people trust the scholars. We already see the beginning of this epoch in instances which require no citation; and we may be content as to the general direction in which the forces are moving.

NOTES ON THE TEACHING OF ART

XIII

NOTES ON THE TEACHING OF ART

You must improve the road bed without stopping the trains. Every artistic labor should have meaning; and scales should never be played as mere gymnastic exercises; there must be music in them. The difficulty in all training is that we are obliged to take up a part at a time, although the essence of every artistic appeal is unity. The academic mind dissects the unity into elements for purposes of discussion. The problem is dissolved and dealt with in pieces. It is stated as grammar, counterpoint, etc. Herein lies an illusion: because all this analysis is always powerless to catch the essence. Therefore in teaching the analysis you must remember that it is a husk. You must remember that this critical view exists merely for purposes of discussion. Criticism is powerless to reach art. Art itself proceeds in a region quite beyond the reach of other expression save itself.

The child does not know this. The child likes the rule. He longs to make art easy. He will go astray and become a brilliant pupil and an empty artist, unless his mind is encouraged to keep the grammar subordinate.

Your form must be perfect, of course. That is nothing. That is merely like "dear sir," or "yours truly"— the symbol of a species of intercourse. Any stammering or equivocation here casts on your meaning a doubt which is avoidable. It must be brushed away quietly, and without withdrawing the attention from the main current of idea — as a pianist finds his place on the keyboard without looking at his hands.

The eternal secret is that life runs, and is never caught. Art is a chase. It shows the direction; it suggests; it follows; it indicates. But the secret remains a secret, the experience an experience. If it were not so the world would be fuller than it is of master-pieces, and the mystery of existence would be explained.

The question, then, at any moment with any pupil is, How much can he carry today? Is he a great river of force and filled with ideas of his own — an advanced student, ambitious, classical-minded? Then

let him wreak his power on the most refined problems of technique — questions that vexed Phidias. These things are what he comes prepared for. He is their scholar. But you will find that good artists, both great and small, are good because, from their earliest years, they have not taken in more than they could digest. They are in the saddle and have always been in the saddle. There has been an artistic impetus in their lives which subordinated their knowledge to their spirit.

Now in teaching a child, the unity of his own mind must never be broken. He must find his harmony and his grammar by degrees — discover and accept and utilize them in the course and process of his own experiments. He must never be made to think that these rules of the art are external realities which must be dominated; because this is not so. They are internal realities which must be approached as part of his own nature.

Though Aquinas and Beethoven should combine to tell me the contrary, I say that if you take a child's mind thoroughly apart, he will be apt never to get it together again. The professors and analysts and teachers of painting are cases in point. These are men

who have believed in the dislocations of theory. Their attention has been unshipped. They have stopped to state the rule, and their machinery will not go on again. The rules of art, which are, properly speaking, merely mnemonic aids to indicate the whereabouts of certain invisible and unimaginable forces, have been treated by these men as categorical realities. Thus a teacher dies easily, and easily kills others. There are those he cannot kill. But there are many he can. The unity of a child's mind is, to some extent, attacked by all teachers except the greatest. The rules, after all, are not gods, but servants; and they must be kept below stairs in their true position as servants. This makes them easy — easy to remember, easy to apply.

In many recent Latin grammars, designed for the smallest children, the custom has come in of giving the usage first, and following it up on the next day with the statement of the rule. The child learns phrases one day, grammar the next. This is right. This method keeps the child informed that the rule is not the truth, but merely an easy way of recalling the truth. No one can speak by rule. We speak by impulse. We must not have — we must

never have had — a set of rules standing between our impulse and our expression.

Let us now remember that composition is a habit — creation is a habit. In the act and process of it, so many extraordinary powers come into play that it can never be done properly except unconsciously, and through the vital force. The flow of life must never be stopped. When a man or a child is working, there is a unity revolving in the back of his head which contains the solution and will provide a result consistent with every law of art and full of new fire besides — if you will but respect it, and take its hints. He must be led to see the classic analysis come and go behind his own phenomena — merge and swim in his own vision. This will make him dissatisfied with his own work unless that work has the classic quality, unless every atomic force is accounted for in the outcome, and every column adds up 100. But such a result must be arrived at by a natural process, or it will never be quite beautiful or quite true.

The transference of a mood into a work of art always involves an element of miracle. It contains something new — a surprise. The artist has had supernatural aid; something has been done for him.

There has been one moment of the unconscious; and then plain sailing. The mood was a unity, and the product is a unity. Between the two the thunderbolt fell. This is true even of slight works of art—even of epigrams. There is a miracle — an incomprehensible communication of force. This is due to the fact that the unity has not been broken. Musicians like Von Bulow, who have taken music all apart and then put it together again, never play quite right. The thing should never have lain in pieces in their mind.

If, then, you have a child to teach who is easily discouraged, do not extinguish him. It may be true that the great artists could not be extinguished. But the chances are that your child is not a great artist. This much, then, remains true in the belief — so wide spread and so pernicious — that art is all genius and that training takes away originality. I am here speculating as to the nature of those men's minds who do, in fact, become artists. And it seems to me that such people have had from youth upward a core of their own. A child must have enough to build on. He must play about and start a method of his own, a germ point, a point of departure — some-

thing, anything that grows. It may be in melody, it may be in portraits, or verses in the style of Addison; unless he has a nest-egg of this kind he will never be an artist. This plasm is part of the immortal web of the universe. All you can do is to steer nutriment towards it.

There are as many kinds of good teaching as there are personal equations between a master and a pupil. By mere silence a teacher of genius may affect the whole future of a child's mind. I do not believe that it is necessary for the formal to swamp the vital even for half an hour. The matter comes up very acutely in violin teaching, and I have often watched with concern the sort of attention which teachers fix upon arms and legs. These attitudes must be assumed of course, but it should be so managed as not to break the thread between the child's mind and the sky.

By a slight change of vocabulary, we may regard art as all technique. Certainly all of these matters consist of doing or of arranging some mechanical thing which gives a certain effect; of screwing up a peg, darkening a shadow, lengthening a pause. But if you insist upon regarding art from this point of view, nevertheless you have

to confess ignorance as to what it is that produces the thing we want. All of the rules and regulations may be obeyed and yet in the outcome we are not satisfied. The rules give us a barmecide feast, because that technique which does the magic is un-get-at-able. We thus find ourselves farther away from an understanding of the matter than if we had accepted its mystery at the beginning.

It is, perhaps, from some such point of view as the foregoing that we ought to approach the great subject; although it would be absurd to stop here and neglect other aspects of the case. Most men have nothing to say. They will under no circumstances become artists. They may hope to be craftsmen; they may gain a little insight into the subject which shall tinge their general education. Or they may become teachers or writers. A school of art besides developing creative artists, enlightens the community in many other ways. It is a focus of pure intellect, and qualifies society. It sends out journeymen, critics, experts, evangelists, heralds of freedom, men of courage, men of knowledge, standard bearers of civilization. It is a school of character and of philosophy; of language

and articulation; of religion and progress. The great artist implies and requires this whole hierarchy, which exists beneath him, of equally sincere but less gifted persons.

Let no one undervalue the æsthetic impulse, or disparage the crude beginnings of art. Any finger-post of art shines with ethereal fire though it be "flute-playing taught here," on a signboard in Omaha. How much is any mind liberalized by even a short apprenticeship to any branch of art! An academy of design does as much for the cause of clear thinking as a college of philosophy. Nothing so stimulates the mind as creative endeavor; and the methods of study in science should be modeled after those of a good art-school. Here we have the cue to any pupil's approach towards any study, namely: it should be through successive original investigations tempered by text books. The psychological problem is the same in the study of science as of art —to keep the old formulations fluid, to possess them and use them, without being possessed or ruled by them. In the realm of science and of art nothing is fact, all is hypothesis, all is symbol.

Teaching is a personal matter and must ever remain so. Schools are only valuable

because they house persons. It is consolatory to remember how easily art springs up when the conditions are right, and how a school of landscape painting may sometimes proceed out of a small town which had no apparent or peculiar advantages in the matter. This is because some man has begun to think and to experiment, to make sketches, to live in his work and carry forward speculations of his own. His pupils take up the argument, and, for a time, life is blown into it; we know not how, there is the breath of art in it.

I do not mean to disparage academies. All the buildings and endowments, all the circulars, prospectuses, must go forward. But let us also be prepared to find that here and there a talent is maturing in solitude, or an artist is working out his destiny, who has only a shred of education to connect him with the artistic traditions of the great world.

Since we are walking with a divining rod, seeking art, wondering what it is, how it arises, how to identify it, holding up a finger to the wind, standing breathless in the heart of the forest to catch the note of the hidden thrush — I will say what comes to me — and that most vaguely on the gen-

eral subject; for the arts and crafts all differ from one another — and differ especially in technicality. The art of making a violin must be learned in a shop; but the art of poetry may be picked up by practice and on the sly. Architecture is organized; literature is greatly disorganized. The arts, moreover, play into each other's hands in strange ways, and the excitement they convey takes new forms upon new soils. The introduction, for instance, of foreign music has an immediate influence on the temperament and philosophy of any people, and is very likely to become visible in belles-lettres and fiction. Walter Scott left many traces upon the painting of Continental Europe; Piranesi, upon the domestic furniture of the entire Western world. The subject lies in a region beyond the reach of accurate study. The reality and the importance of it is apt to be brought home to us through meeting some talented child to whom the language of one of these arts is native and necessary. We begin to look with his eyes, to hear with his ears, and, behold, we gain an introduction to new worlds. Here now lies a practical matter; for the future of art depends upon the education of infants.

There is one plain rule for the discovery of artistic talent: the child is found at work, scribbling or strumming or drawing. He is inseparable from practice. He is already in the traces, he needs only guidance. You may supply materials; interest you need not supply, he is already under the spell. There are threads of golden woof and web that gleam, appearing and disappearing in the air — æolian harps placed in the windows of life. These are the visions of humanity, the visions of former artists. The whole world is full of them. They hang from the rafters like magic spider-webs to catch the imagination of youth. Here is glittering apparel which the child feels to be his own, and would put on immediately.

Now what is the relation between the long years of drudgery that must, as a rule, be gone through, and the ultimate heaven of creative work? This question cannot be answered simply. Great diligence in technical matters has some relation to remote spiritual interests; and a passion for exactitude in the drawing of an apple will issue in some sort of force in the painting of a crucifixion. Literature seems to be even more mysterious than the other arts; and the relation between careful writing and the

development of power is here very obscure and yet very certain. It always seems as if the talented child were already in charge of a spirit which we could not see, who whispered to him that this digging must be done for the treasure. It seems to be unquestionable that those remotest and most happy touches of genius which one would say, no study could come at, no experience suggest, are the very ones which are due to a knowledge of the craft, to long experience and private endeavor.

The handling of difficulties seems to be the road to facilities. Something crudely and honestly analyzed cracks the shell of the mystery; and an impersonal artistic treatment becomes the vehicle of the most personal kind of expression. Thus the limitations — namely, those very conditions which constitute technique — give rise through compression to the soul of the work.

The artist's education, which comes from constant work, involves, somehow, the recording of ever-increasing depths of personal vision and of private history. At last nature brings her gifts on a silver salver to the perfect artist and puts her words in his mouth. He thinks he is merely pursu-

ing the solution of a problem, and, in effect, he is unrolling the hidden tapestries of his own soul. What portions of his work ought one to consider as technical? What portions as non-technical? I do not know; nor can anyone imagine.

Teaching consists in helping the pupil's mind towards an understanding of itself. A moderately endowed mathematician may teach a child of mathematical genius, and teach him well. So may a teacher of grammar, or of music, or of architecture teach things far beyond his own powers of accomplishment. He suggests and inspires. This is a very consolatory reflection; and it is indeed true that the academic person may carry the fire of Prometheus in a rod of fennel. The people who do this have the quality of genius about them: they are teachers of genius. They cannot create, and yet then can transmit, they can illumine. In their own peculiar way they are artists too — or at any rate, prophets of art.

MARIA WESTON CHAPMAN

XIV

MARIA WESTON CHAPMAN

MARIA WESTON CHAPMAN deserves a medallion in the historic hall of her generation. Indeed she looked and bore herself like bronze and marble, and made upon all observers the impression of heroic womanhood. There are women who have a maturity in their walk even in their teens, and who carry a girlish bearing into old age. There is a unity and a focus in their being which makes them distinguished. In all they do or say there is some natural force which is inevitable and spontaneous. All this is largely a matter of physical endowment, and goes with abundant health. In my grandmother's case it went with a kind of victorious beauty which became accentuated as the "cordage of the countenance" declared itself in her latest years.

As a small child I was immensely impressed with her. I had never seen anyone

like her. She looked like a cameo, and yet had a buoyant — I had almost said bounding — quality which cameos do not suggest. Many persons in her generation were imposing, but she was the first of them that I ever saw, and this gave me a new idea of how people of the great world might or ought to appear. She had a talent for conduct, she had a genius for appearance. She was exactly fitted to lead a cause; and the cause of Abolition, which broke into flame during her girlhood, was a most perfect and typical example of what a cause can be. It was a religious awakening. It began with great and sudden fervor in the breasts of a few people, and worked in such a manner as to separate these people from the rest of the community. To awaken the rest of America became their one idea. Converts came to them, as is usual in such cases, chiefly from the humbler classes; and the emotional fervor of the movement burned with a steady heat for thirty years, till in one way or another every individual in the nation was reached by it. The Abolitionists are sometimes blamed for causing the war; but the real cause of the war was human nature. The war was the final working out of a great change. Aboli-

tion was merely the symptom that a change had begun.

Mrs. Chapman was an early convert, and was well fitted to take the lead in such a movement, or, more accurately speaking, to stage and conduct the cause; for Garrison was her leader, and she was in every sense a standard-bearer and a lieutenant,— never, properly speaking, the leader. She was always handsomely dressed, smiling, dominant, ready to meet all comers. She entered a room like a public person. She was a doughty swordswoman in conversation, and wore armor. There was something about her that reminded me of a gladiator, and I sometimes wondered how she had ever borne children at all and whether she had nursed them, or had just marched off to the wars in Gaul and Iberia, while the urchins were being cared for by a freed-woman in the Campania. She was fond of children nevertheless, and used to invite her grandchildren to come to her room, where she would inaugurate the most ceremonious and important sessions of book-covering, and the making of scrap-books, cuttings, and pastings. The gum-arabic must be bought and melted down on the previous day, the figured papers and prints were pro-

duced from European sources, and the whole manufacture was conducted with pomp and mystery. She used to read Shakespeare to us when the youngest was about three, and she would arrange the drawing-room to represent the stage. She had Cæsar on his bier covered with drapery, and a bit of hidden marble to represent his Roman nose. When she read aloud she was so particular about the state of her voice, her enunciation, and her delivery that she would eat no dinner before a performance, but take only the juice of a lemon — as if she were to sing in grand opera.

I think that her temperament and physique must in early life have marked her as a figure-head, and that the many years she afterwards spent in Europe as the representative of a cause gave her, perhaps, the habit of the part. She was, in fact, an *embodiment;* and this is the reason why her presence conveyed more than her spoken or written words, and why people were so astonished at her, and have left so many descriptions of her. At the basis of her effectiveness was a perfectly phenomenal fund of physical health. She was beaming and ruddy down to her last days — for

she was nearly eighty when she died, and had spent many years toward the end of her life in nursing a paralyzed brother.

One great and rare merit she shared with Garrison. When their cause triumphed they retired, and both of them deserve in this to be canonized for their good taste,—a virtue not always found in Abolitionists. She retired, then, and lived in Weymouth, Massachusetts, for twenty years or more, with a mother and several sisters, all of them highly educated, bookish people, and two of them, Anne and Dora Weston, staunch anti-slavery veterans. The house was full of souvenirs of Europe, and of presentation copies of the works of mid-century European writers. To be an exile for opinion's sake is the best introduction to the liberals of all foreign countries; and Paris, during the Second Empire, contained many distinguished Frenchmen who felt that they too were in exile. The French intellectuals were hospitable to the leaders of American anti-slavery, who, so far as social life went, found in France more than they had lost at home.

All the glamour and excitement of life must have gone out of it for my grandmother with the close of the war; yet she

continued to live as freshly and to talk as gladly as if some persecution were still in progress, and she were Joan of Arc on the way to the pyre.

Certain failings she had,— perhaps I ought rather to call them never-failings. The sword would leap from the scabbard at any allusion to past controversy in which she or Mr. Garrison had been concerned, or in which anyone in the world had held opinions condemned by the Garrisonians. The sword of Gideon flashed with unabated grace. The indignation was as fresh as manna in Arabia — renewed with every matin. She really believed that the memory of the wicked should rot, and that the wicked were — almost everyone in the past, and a good many among the survivors. If Channing had been wrong in 1828, she would excoriate him in 1882. If Sumner had hesitated at some moment to see the white light of truth, then his bones must be dragged from their resting place and his habitation become a dunghill. Among the true, inner-seal Garrisonians the *wrong kind* of anti-slavery was always considered as anti-Christ; and the feats of memory which the Old Guard of Abolition exhibited with regard to the ins and outs of an-

cient controversy went far to explain the survival of Homer's poems throughout the long centuries before writing was invented. So, as by fire, are certain things burned into men's souls.

I must here sorrowfully record a distinction between my grandmother and Garrison himself. Garrison was never rancorous, at least he was never really rancorous. His rancor was political and done for effect. He assumed a tone of malevolence for rhetorical reasons. Now, my grandmother became, by a kind of necessity, more religious than the Pope himself. She was a partisan: she had not the liberty which the leader enjoys of changing her mind, or of being inconsistently good-humored when she felt like it. She was a halberdier and body-guard. She never seemed to disagree with Mr. Garrison or to turn a critical eye on him. I believe it would have done them both good if she had lifted her battle-ax against the hero now and then.

For twenty-five years she was manager of the Annual Anti-slavery Bazaar which raised the funds for the cause. Europe was laid under contribution for interesting and odd things, which should draw Pro-

Slavery Boston to the booths. The preparation for the great Fair went on pretty steadily during the rest of the year, and this branch of anti-slavery propaganda was useful in keeping the liberals in Europe in touch with our struggle. Mrs. Chapman edited a little annual volume or keepsake, called "The Liberty Bell," which contained many articles by herself. As the executive of an unpopular cause her business was to be always in good spirits, always in the right, always insuperably competent. It is clear that her activity belongs to a very noble species of political activity rather than to the field of philosophy. The religion of labor makes character, but is injurious to mind. And I cannot help thinking of all the anti-slavery people as being earth-born, titanic creatures, whom Nature spawned to stay a plague — and then withdrew them, and broke the mold. Heroic they remain.

It will be remembered that our struggle over slavery showed up the organized churches of Christianity in a terrible light. What was the use of such churches as ours were shown to be? Where was Christ to be found in them? If an Abolitionist were by nature a mystic, or an evangelical person

(like Garrison or S. J. May), he naturally took refuge in the New Testament itself. If he were by nature neither mystical nor romantic, he was apt to become a stoic; and it was to this class that my grandmother belonged. We may see the same tendency exhibited on a great scale in the history of France. The hold which the classics have on the French temperament is due to this,— that the French are not sufficiently emotional to be in sympathy with Hebrew thought: it offends them. The morality of France is stoical. My grandmother was, in her endowments, and in her limitations, very much such a person as a virtuous stoic of the ancient world may have been. Her religion was a totality as to conduct, but was fragmentary in statement. It was made up of proverbs, poems, and anecdotes from all ages,— wisdom-scraps of an encouraging and militant nature. When the original Garrisonians began their work in 1832 they supposed that slavery would fall before their strokes in a very few years,— five or ten perhaps. And so subtly does the alchemy of activity sustain hope, that they never for a moment lost their conviction that victory was imminent, throughout the thirty years during which victory kept re-

ceding before them like the mirage of water in the desert. They only wondered at the delay.

A Cause like this solves all questions whether they be matters of metaphysical doubt or of practical life. One's business is ruined, of course. A child dies; alas, it is severe, but let the Cause consume our grief. All social ties were snapped long ago; it is a trifle. The old standard-bearers are dropping out from time to time through death; peace be unto them, we have others.

The discipline of such a life — so unusual, so singular — wore down men and women into athletes; the stress made them strong. Thus the anti-slavery fighters grew hardy through a sort of Roman endurance, which shows in their physiognomy. It is this force behind the stroke of fate that we see in people's faces,— the power behind the die that mints them.

A very notable feature in my grandmother's life was her friendship with Harriet Martineau, whose literary executor she afterwards became. The friendship was a flawless and enduring union. It began in 1835, and was a source of unalloyed happi-

ness to both women; it ended with Miss Martineau's death in 1876. The attachment was accompanied by independence on both sides, but my grandmother used to speak of Harriet Martineau with the same sort of reverence that Miss Martineau uses in speaking of her.

At one time Miss Martineau thought of coming to America to work in the Abolition cause. She writes: "The discovery of her [Mrs. Chapman's] moral power and insight were to me so extraordinary that, while I longed to work with and under her, I felt that it must be morally perilous to lean on any one mind as I could not but lean on hers."

The beginning of their intimacy was not without dramatic interest. When Miss Martineau arrived in this country on a pleasure trip, at the age of thirty-three, she was probably the best known, and certainly the most powerful woman in England. Her writings and her opinions had brought her unprecedented popularity both in that country and in America. It was therefore of great importance to the struggling Abolitionists to gain her adherence to their cause. My grandmother wrote to Miss Martineau

while the latter was on her travels in the South, but received a rebuff from the authoress.

The time soon came, however, when Miss Martineau felt forced by her conscience to support the unpopular and hated cause of Abolition. She was, as she says, unexpectedly and very reluctantly, but necessarily, implicated in the struggle. The occasion of her declaration of faith was a meeting of the Ladies' Anti-slavery Society at the house of Francis Jackson on November 18, 1835. She accepted an invitation to this meeting, to the great scandal of her Boston hosts. She attended the meeting and, when called upon, gave, in a few words, the enormous prestige of her name to the cause. This cut short her social career in America, and she became the victim of every kind of vilification. She understood this consequence and did not enjoy it, for it ruined her trip and prevented her seeing American social life.

But the greater moral triumph at the back of this small unpleasantness was also understood both by Miss Martineau and by the audience of women in the hushed parlor of Francis Jackson, at the time she expressed her anti-slavery conviction in a few

solemn words. It must be noted parenthetically that everyone who speaks of my grandmother always dwells upon the way she looked. It is her looks that they cannot forget.

Miss Martineau in her account of the meeting at Mr. Jackson's says: "When I was putting on my shawl upstairs, Mrs. Chapman came to me, bonnet in hand, to say, 'You know we are threatened with a mob again to-day: but I do not myself much apprehend it. It must not surprise us; but my hopes are stronger than my fears.'

"I hear now, as I write, the clear silvery tones of her who was to be the friend of the rest of my life. I still see the exquisite beauty which took me by surprise that day; the slender, graceful form, the golden hair which might have covered her feet; the brilliant complexion, noble profile, and deep blue eyes; the aspect meant by nature to be soft and winning only, but that day (as ever since), so vivified by courage, and so strengthened by upright conviction, as to appear the very embodiment of heroism. 'My hopes,' she said as she threw up her golden hair under her bonnet, 'are stronger than my fears.'"

In the same account Miss Martineau de-

scribes the extreme tension that existed concerning her own attitude toward Abolition. No one knew just where she stood, or what she was going to say. She describes also the wave of emotion that swept over the little assemblage upon her unequivocal announcement of her hatred of slavery, and continues: "As I concluded Mrs. Chapman bowed down her glowing face on her folded arms, and there was a murmur of satisfaction through the room, while outside, the growing crowd (which did not, however, become large) was hooting and yelling and throwing mud and dirt against the windows."

COATESVILLE

XV

COATESVILLE [1]

We are met to commemorate the anniversary of one of the most dreadful crimes in history — not for the purpose of condemning it, but to repent of our share in it. We do not start any agitation with regard to that particular crime. I understand that an attempt to prosecute the chief criminals has

The explanation of Mr. Chapman's prayer meeting in Coatesville, besides what he says in his address following, is best given in these words of his own taken from a letter:

"I was greatly moved by the Coatesville lynching at the time it occurred, and as the anniversary came round my inner idea began to force me to do something. I felt as if the whole country would be different if any one man did something in penance, and so I went to Coatesville and declared my intention of holding a prayer meeting to the various business men I could buttonhole. Then there appeared an extraordinary thing—the outcome of the lynching, *i. e.*, that there is a reign of terror in Coatesville at this moment. If you speak of it you are suspect . . . The daily local newspaper at first refused

[1] Reprinted from *Harper's Weekly*.

been made, and has entirely failed; because the whole community, and in a sense our whole people, are really involved in the guilt. The failure of the prosecution in this case, in all such cases, is only a proof of the magnitude of the guilt, and of the awful fact that everyone shares in it.

I will tell you why I am here; I will tell you what happened to me. When I read in the newspapers of August 14, a year ago, about the burning alive of a human being, and of how a few desperate, fiend-minded men had been permitted to torture a man chained to an iron bedstead, burning alive, thrust back by pitchforks when he strug-

to mention the lynching in the notice of the prayer meeting, but, finally, it was printed on the first page for two successive days. Everyone in the city knew of it. A friend of mine came over from New York, and we did hold the meeting in an unused store—a prayer meeting with Bible readings, addresses, prayer, silent prayer, and a talk on the whole matter. Two persons came: one an anti-slavery old Negress, who lives in Boston and was staying in Coatesville; the other a man who was, I think, an 'outpost' finding out what was up. We held the meeting just as if there was a crowd, and I delivered my address. There was a church meeting going on opposite to us, and people coming and going and gazing, and our glass front windows revealed us like Daniel when he was commanded to open the windows and pray."

gled out of it, while around about stood hundreds of well-dressed American citizens, both from the vicinity and from afar, coming on foot and in wagons, assembling on telephone call, as if by magic, silent, whether from terror or indifference, fascinated and impotent, hundreds of persons watching this awful sight and making no attempt to stay the wickedness, and no one man among them all who was inspired to risk his life in an attempt to stop it, no one man to name the name of Christ, of humanity, of government! As I read the newspaper accounts of the scene enacted here in Coatesville a year ago, I seemed to get a glimpse into the unconscious soul of this country. I saw a seldom revealed picture of the American heart and of the American nature. I seemed to be looking into the heart of the criminal — a cold thing, an awful thing.

I said to myself, "I shall forget this, we shall all forget it; but it will be there. What I have seen is not an illusion. It is the truth. I have seen death in the heart of this people." For to look at the agony of a fellow-being and remain aloof means death in the heart of the onlooker. Religious fanaticism has sometimes lifted men

to the frenzy of such cruelty, political passion has sometimes done it, personal hatred might do it, the excitement of the amphitheater in the degenerate days of Roman luxury could do it. But here an audience chosen by chance in America has stood spellbound through an improvised *auto-da-fé*, irregular, illegal, having no religious significance, not sanctioned by custom, having no immediate provocation, the audience standing by merely in cold dislike.

I saw during one moment something beyond all argument in the depth of its significance. You might call it the paralysis of the nerves about the heart in a people habitually and unconsciously given over to selfish aims, an ignorant people who knew not what spectacle they were providing, or what part they were playing in a judgment-play which history was exhibiting on that day.

No theories about the race problem, no statistics, legislation, or mere educational endeavor, can quite meet the lack which that day revealed in the American people. For what we saw was death. The people stood like blighted things, like ghosts about Acheron, waiting for someone or something to determine their destiny for them.

Whatever life itself is, that thing must

be replenished in us. The opposite of hate is love, the opposite of cold is heat; what we need is the love of God and reverence for human nature. For one moment I knew that I had seen our true need; and I was afraid that I should forget it and that I should go about framing arguments and agitations and starting schemes of education, when the need was deeper than education. And I became filled with one idea, that I must not forget what I had seen, and that I must do something to remember it. And I am here to-day chiefly that I may remember that vision. It seems fitting to come to this town where the crime occurred and hold a prayer-meeting, so that our hearts may be turned to God through whom mercy may flow into us.

Let me say one thing more about the whole matter. The subject we are dealing with is not local. The act, to be sure, took place at Coatesville and everyone looked to Coatesville to follow it up. Some months ago I asked a friend who lives not far from here something about this case, and about the expected prosecutions, and he replied to me: "It wasn't in my county," and that made me wonder whose county it was in. And it seemed to be in my county. I live

on the Hudson River; but I knew that this great wickedness that happened in Coatesville is not the wickedness of Coatesville nor of to-day. It is the wickedness of all America and of three hundred years — the wickedness of the slave trade. All of us are tinctured by it. No special place, no special persons, are to blame. A nation cannot practice a course of inhuman crime for three hundred years and then suddenly throw off the effects of it. Less than fifty years ago domestic slavery was abolished among us; and in one way and another the marks of that vice are in our faces. There is no country in Europe where the Coatesville tragedy or anything remotely like it could have been enacted, probably no country in the world.

On the day of the calamity, those people in the automobiles came by the hundred and watched the torture, and passers-by came in a great multitude and watched it — and did nothing. On the next morning the newspapers spread the news and spread the paralysis until the whole country seemed to be helplessly watching this awful murder, as awful as anything ever done on the earth; and the whole of our people seemed to be

looking on helplessly, not able to respond, not knowing what to do next. That spectacle has been in my mind.

The trouble has come down to us out of the past. The only reason that slavery is wrong is that it is cruel and makes men cruel and leaves them cruel. Someone may say that you and I cannot repent because we did not do the act. But we are involved in it. We are still looking on. Do you not see that this whole event is merely the last parable, the most vivid, the most terrible illustration that ever was given by man or imagined by a Jewish prophet, of the relation between good and evil in this world, and of the relation of men to one another?

This whole matter has been an historic episode; but it is a part, not only of our national history, but of the personal history of each one of us. With the great disease (slavery) came the climax (the war), and after the climax gradually began the cure, and in the process of cure comes now the knowledge of what the evil was. I say that our need is new life, and that books and resolutions will not save us, but only such disposition in our hearts and souls as

will enable the new life, love, force, hope, virtue, which surround us always, to enter into us.

This is the discovery that each man must make for himself — the discovery that what he really stands in need of he cannot get for himself, but must wait till God gives it to him. I have felt the impulse to come here to-day to testify to this truth.

The occasion is not small; the occasion looks back on three centuries and embraces a hemisphere. Yet the occasion is small compared with the truth it leads us to. For this truth touches all ages and affects every soul in the world.

JULIA WARD HOWE

XVI

JULIA WARD HOWE

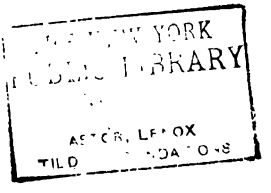
THE great Doctor Howe, whose figure towers over little Boston, was a man in middle life, and was well understood by Europe and America to be one of the world's wise men, when he married a New York girl of remarkable beauty, wit and wealth. This was in the year 1843. It made little difference to Dr. Howe where he lived, or what circle he moved in; but when he threw in his fortunes with the anti-slavery outcasts and Beacon Street looked askance at him, it made this difference to his wife, that she never really became a Bostonian. She lived, however, to become one of the best known personalities in the town, and to have a little court of her own. There was something about her which attracted individuals of all conditions, from foreign patriots,— the residuaries of Dr. Howe's revolutionary interests,— to the most modern representatives of every social reform.

Her own people had been bankers, with harps and marble statues in their salons. Singing, and Italian lessons, and the provincial splendors of early New York had been hers; and after her marriage with Dr. Howe, she had traveled with him abroad and had seen many of the celebrities of Europe at a time when genius was in bloom there.

Apart from all this, she was in herself a daughter of the great liberal epoch of the nineteenth century which produced Bright, Garrison, Garibaldi and a whole race of lesser social missionaries who felt that they were marching to music, and who never doubted that clouds would break and truth triumph in the end,— men and women whose idealism and whose belief in the destinies of mankind bound them into a sort of brotherhood in world politics. She had, at any rate, lived among the heroes of her time, and she retained to the end a bigness and heroic outlook upon life which belonged to the epoch of her youth. Furthermore she was a poetess. In early married life she published a volume or two of verse, which were read and admired by the world of American letters, and the luster of which never quite left her. Neither she nor her

From a photograph by Altman

MRS. JULIA WARD HOWE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circle ever forgot that there were laurels on her brow.

It must be remembered also that she continued in her own person the traditions of the Transcendentalists, whose school of thought became submerged in the welter of the anti-slavery struggle. She was a friend and disciple of Emerson and felt, as indeed every transcendentalist felt, that she had a metaphysical creed to expound. If the writings of this school have left little that is powerful except the Essays of the master himself, nevertheless the spirit of the Oversoul became expressed in the lives of many of his contemporaries. I have known people who wrote philosophy very ill, who yet seemed to have received a kind of heavenly message from stepping in and out of Emerson's library. This species of Emersonianism clung to Mrs. Howe.

Some serene element of the successful person, who lives above circumstance, shone out of her conversation,— which was, by the way, extremely unlike the Concord school of talk. She was always a doughty, gallant battler in the drawing-room, with the old style of attack. She feutered her lance, as was the custom of the forties, and rode her charger straight at the opponent.

The accidents of the world, which had swept away wealth and had left her only a modest little house, and a scanty income, had taken nothing from her. She had always lived in mansions of her own. Her guests were kings and queens to her. If the door had been opened by a charity girl with a wooden leg, and the meal had consisted of a chop on a trencher, the guest would still have felt that he was being welcomed with reverence and was feasting with Hafiz and Melchior. There are people in whom spiritual experiences dissolve self-consciousness, so that all humanity walks for them on the same social plane. Such was the ideal of the antique philosophers, and Mrs. Howe, in a certain way, reminded one of those ancients. Ben Franklin had the same quality in his old age,— a quality which no one ought to attain to in youth; for youth is properly dedicated to error. When Mrs. Howe was young, she was so high-spirited and self-willed that she sometimes became a problem to her friends. Old ladies have told me about her romanticism and her uncontrollability. I knew her only in old age, and when her chief characteristic was an unfailing gayety. It was strange that a woman of causes, whose main business was

to worry politicians, arouse the people and do in fact the most unpleasant things a woman can do, never should have betrayed those traces of the work which are seen in almost all public spirited women.

Mrs. Howe was liberal, spontaneous, feminine. Her supreme endowment was her health. She had the domed brow and the bonhomie of a woman who has never been sick. Such people are ever younger than their children; for their children soon grow up into sad, practical men and women, while they themselves retain the buoyancy of youth. The world cannot teach them sorrow. Mrs. Howe thus became the pet of her numerous children, at the same time that she was the Mother Superior of the latest generation of nonconformist philanthropy in Boston. She accepted both posts with enthusiasm.

Her power of enjoyment was a natural advantage, like a large fortune or a great talent, and it was really this force that made her beloved. If she had a weakness, it was the weakness of almost all leaders, the habit of accepting adulation from insignificant people, whom she suffered to rest in the belief that she was a prophetess. But she did this so innocently, and humbly, that I

cannot feel sure that her own hopes and illusions as to her greatness were not a part of her charm.

The marvel of her was that she should never have been influenced by Boston. She was not even irritated by the self-sufficiency of Bostonians, by that slight mental cramp in them which is a grief to many of their sincerest admirers. Of course everybody in Boston knew her. One couldn't help knowing her. The policemen knew her; the school-children sang her "Battle Hymn of the Republic"; the statesmen, scholars, scientists, and publicists for a generation regarded her as one of their cherished institutions and as a pillar of the crumbling world. Individual Beacon Street knew her, but not collective Beacon Street. To collective Beacon Street she was *persona non grata*. I remember being a little shocked at the way certain very nice people used to speak of her; though in retrospect, the prejudice which good society has against non-conforming greatness, appears in the light of agreeable local color.

I have often lain awake at night wondering what was the matter with Boston. At such times, anecdotes creep out of corners in my memory and throw doubtful gleams

of light on possible solutions. But I cannot catch and chain these ideas. One of my classmates, a modest youth from South Carolina, when he was a Freshman at Harvard, walked into the bosom of a great Boston drawing-room with his overshoes on. All the family were seated about,— the aged and distinguished grandparents, the model father, the benignant mother, and many appropriate children of all ages. My friend was unconscious of his predicament, young and modest. Summoning all of his imperfect Southern breeding, he did his best with the hard beginnings of cheerful talk. But he felt an oppression in the air, then a wave of sympathy,— a sense of humiliation,— a waiting fear. He saw that the younger members of the family were in hurried consultation about something, which he prophetically knew concerned himself. The suspense became unbearable, and at last an appropriate child of the family group drew him aside and whispered to him the awful truth. My friend told me the story the next day, and I knew instantly, and I know now, that the solution of Boston lay beneath my hand if I had but the wit to see it. But what is it?

Clarence King told me that he happened

to be in Boston in 1870, when Bret Harte first appeared upon the extreme Western horizon, with his "Luck of Roaring Camp," and the rest of his wonderful earliest work in his hand. King at once became an object of interest in Boston because he knew Bret Harte, and was taken to lunch with the famous Saturday Club at the Parker House, where Longfellow, Holmes, Emerson, Lowell and the other immortals resorted for pie and for celestial converse. Mr. Longfellow, who was the most gracious gentleman that ever lived, turned to King and asked in regard to Bret Harte — "But is he a genius?" Longfellow pronounced the word "ge-ni-us," and quietly paused for a reply. King said, "Why as to that, Mr. Longfellow, everybody knows that the country possesses no *three-syllabled genius* outside of Massachusetts." "Did they laugh?" I asked of King. "Not a smile," he said. "But afterwards, Dr. Holmes came round during the coffee and cigars and pressed my hand quietly and told me that that was a good thing I had said to Longfellow."

In this anecdote, we get very near the secret. Why didn't those gentlemen laugh? They were the wittiest set in America, fond

of laughing, collected at lunch for the very purpose of joking. Yes, but not at *themselves;* and not in response to the jest of a new, raw outsider. Had Dr. Holmes himself made the quip, it would have been repeated all over Boston. But they were not prepared to laugh before knowing whether Clarence King was a wit. Where was his certificate? And who let him in, anyway?

The great, terrible, important powers of the world, like social caste and religious domination, always rest on secrets. A man is born on the wrong side of the street and can therefore never enter into certain drawing-rooms, even though he be in every way superior to everyone in those drawing-rooms. When you try to find out what the difference is between him and the rest, and why he is accursed, you find that the reason is a secret. It is a secret that a certain kind of straw hat is damnable. Little boys know these things about other little boys. The world is written over with mysterious tramp-languages and symbols of Masonic hieroglyphics. I know these things because I belong to the Masonic Lodge of Massachusetts. By the accident of birth I am inside Boston (Æschylus says that relationship is a tremendous force). I am inside of

Boston, and I am going to divulge the meaning of every Masonic symbol which I can decipher.

Boston has always been a hieratic aristocracy. Its chief rulers were parsons in the eighteenth century, and business men in the nineteenth. But you may take it for granted that there was always a pharisaical clique in the middle of Boston, a clique of elders. The anthropologists have no doubt a name for the gang-instinct and cryptic passion that binds thieves together, and fills the words "he is one of us" with so much religious power. Now, amid all the downfall of Puritanism, and of the old Boston cultivation, the inner core of a loyalty to a local priesthood still rules the city; and, on the whole, rules it well. Social Boston is a religious society, so also in business Boston, so is sporting Boston, so is literary Boston. If you know the town well, you will often find persons there who are not of the caste. Their countenances do not fall at the mention of Moses and Aaron, and they wear no phylacteries. You will generally find that such people are mere sojourners in Boston; their fathers and grandfathers came from elsewhere.

One should immerse one's self occasion-

ally in some hieratic influence in order to understand how vulgar and disgusting any merely personal virtue appears in the eyes of the faithful. The devout Protestant is, to the devout Catholic, a gross and boorish person.

The nature of Mrs. Howe's social talents was not acceptable to the taste of Boston. Her house was full of Persians, Armenians, and the professors of strange new faiths. I think it was her followers rather than herself that displeased the Bostonians. She sat at the gate and entertained all men, including a lot of people who Boston thought ought not to be entertained. But there she sat, nevertheless,— all courage, all wit and all benignity, and so will the image of her ever remain in the minds of the thousands of those who knew her.

THE NEGRO QUESTION

XVII

THE NEGRO QUESTION

I COME here with some reluctance this evening; because I do not wish to be obliged to make up my mind about the race question. In making up one's mind, one closes one's mind; and this race question,— which is no more than the struggle between Good and Evil put into visible shape,— can only be settled from moment to moment by any one of us. In so far as we ourselves are perfect, we settle it for the moment.

The history of the United States down to about 1870 is a history of this particular struggle between good and evil. Our constitutional questions, Secession, the Civil War, Reconstruction,— all the heat and agony of our political life during seventy years, came out of this negro question. Since 1870, the negro question has ceased to be the pivot upon which our whole civilization turned, and has sunk to the position

of being the chief among the great problems before us. It is a problem that has been clearly recognized and is being nobly met by the whites and by the blacks alike. Christianity, training, and education — these things are the solution, these things are the need of all of us. If we keep our individual minds clear of all rancor, time will do the rest.

I believe that no race ever had a better hero than the colored race has to-day in Booker Washington. He is the embodiment of what all of us ought to be in regard to this question: not only the negro but the white man looks upon him with reverence, and learns from him to be patient, to put away animosity, to have faith in God, to pursue inflexibly processes which operate slowly.

The two races in America are spiritually in contact and can only improve in unison. Therefore when an Association of this kind is formed for "the advancement of the colored race," it might just as well be called "for the advancement of the white race." I suppose that you all understand this.

There is a great law governing the meeting of races. When a powerful race meets a helpless race, two things happen. First

there is a carnival of crime. Cruelty and oppression take place: some men in each race become evil and hard-hearted. But the reverse also happens thereafter; goodness and mercy are developed: certain men become saints and heroes. Now in America we had two hundred and fifty years of the epoch during which both races were being injured by contact with one another, both were being made miserable, both brutalized, and in consequence of this very epoch of slavery our whole land to-day is still full of hard, hard hearts.

But the tide seems now to be running the other way, and the pressure created by the living together of the two races seems to be generating virtue. The educators and missionaries, the philanthropists and thinkers have sprung up in America and have devoted themselves to the negro question. They form a sort of army. There are apostles and servants of Christ among us who have been called into being through this very question, and whose existence gives dignity to our whole civilization. They have not solved the question as yet. The depravity of the blacks and the lynchings by the whites have not ceased. Burnings of negroes at the stake still draw upon our na-

tion the contempt and horror of mankind. But the spirit that is to put an end to these things has already been born.

True reform comes slowly; and no race was ever freed except by its own efforts,— no man saved except through himself. Therefore, when I hear of the struggles which the poor negroes are making in the South, to civilize and to educate themselves, when I hear of how they eke out illiberal public grants with mites saved out of their poverty, of how they are long suffering and reasonable,— I say to myself, This was worth waiting for. These people are saving themselves. They will obtain the money which they need, and will use it rightly. The same thought is of harder application to the lynching question. The communities where lynching occurs can only recover their power of self-government through their own efforts. The flower must grow out of the soil. The man on the spot who is a part of the community where lynching is threatened, must risk his life or lay his life down freely in defense of law. A mere willingness on the part of one man to do this will generally stop a lynching. And you will observe that this spirit is beginning to manifest itself among

our people, and will end by preventing the atrocities.

I used to bewail the present legacy of the Slave-trade as much as the original iniquity of it. The fact that the negroes are here at all seemed almost to over-punish America for the crime of their importation. I used to think that the consequences which that crime entailed in the perpetuation among us of passions fierce and base, and in the mingling of races that are better apart, were pure evils,— ghastly never-ending punishments. But now I believe that it is foolish to argue in such a manner as this about historic things. The subject is beyond our comprehension. What we think the greatest evils in our minute lives often bring to us the greatest blessings. It may be so with nations.

The race question certainly puts each of us to the alternative of becoming a great deal holier, a great deal kinder, a great deal deeper in character, or else of being brutalized to some extent. We have not yet got free from some of the intellectual consequences of slavery. The old cruelty of the plantation is gone, and yet I sometimes hear rich people in club-rooms arguing about the negro question in a spirit, and from a point

of view, that indicates an intellectual injury. My own friends sometimes show scars of the mind in dealing with the negro question. They become for a moment like sixteenth-century pirates, — their eyes glitter, and they talk tyranny. Yet these men are now mere relics. The newer age shows ever fewer of the type. Such meetings as this show that the American people are choosing the upward path. Hardly a day passes but we see new proofs that America will solve her race question in the only way it can be solved,— through herself becoming more gentle and more intelligent.

Our progress in this direction is slow; the path leads upward at a very small angle. But let us remember that slowness of growth is what America most needs in all directions. In everything we have grown up too quickly. To-day all things among us go crashing forward too quickly. We should not desire sudden changes, even for the better. Sudden changes signify short-lived events. Therefore, if we see steady improvement going forward anywhere, let us rejoice that it goes forward slowly, so that its roots may sink deep, and all nature may accommodate herself to the change. Thus will the good things become permanent.

Isaiah says in a text that is too seldom quoted: "He that believeth shall not make haste." Those words seem to suggest the very patience which is the national endowment of the negro race. We see the virtue to-day in the meek and sturdy spirit with which the leaders of that race are building up schools and sending out missionaries. They are men of long wind and great faith. They refuse to be drawn into controversy or to take part in occasional excitement. They realize the nature of their work. They have studied their problem with the passion of their souls, and they understand it. And we, who belong to the white race, may herein find our best lesson. We also must have long wind and perfect faith. We must be as patient, and school ourselves as thoroughly as they.

ALFRED Q. COLLINS

XVIII

ALFRED Q. COLLINS

Alfred Collins was a man of remarkable talents, and he belonged by nature to at least two of the great spiritual cliques of the world. The first of these cliques was a worship of intellectual accuracy, and the second was a passion for art. He was one of the first generation of idealists that arose after the Civil War, and through whose labors new life has been poured into our architecture, politics, charity and education. He was to have been the painter of this epoch; as McKim became its architect. He was to have filled out the niche of painting in the temple of the new idealism. To such a destiny, at any rate, we assigned Collins, when I first knew him; and although he never attained to the rank we dreamed of, nevertheless he became one of the most successful portrait painters of his day, and was regarded by a circle of contemporary artists as a high priest of technical endeavor, — a spirit of unpurchasable integrity, whose work astonished and inspired. His portraits were not numerous, yet he always had staunch clients behind him, who were con-

vinced of his importance. Their confidence was, I believe, largely due to the steady and generous admiration of other painters, an admiration which was a credit to the times.

Alfred Collins was a lad without means, born in a land which seemed to possess neither art nor aspirations for art, whose inhabitants would not recognize talent if it should appear, and would be apt to discriminate against their own countrymen whenever this was possible. I knew the generation of artists in America to which Collins belonged, and, with regard to most of them, the struggle always seemed too severe. Our public had neither knowledge nor sympathy, nor money to give to these men. They seemed to be drawing upon a vacuum in trying to paint at all. Yet there was in America, at that time, an undoubted impulse toward painting, which sent these men to France, the art-center of the period.

Collins started in life as a bank clerk in Boston. His mind, however, was as non-commercial as if he had always lived in a Spanish Convent. His intellectual outlook was unblemished. He was sent to study in Paris by Mr. Quincy Shaw of Boston. Collins and his compatriots arrived in Paris during an epoch when the arts were de-

clining, in fact when the old craftsman's formulas were being thrown away, and caustic, dissolvent criticism was in the air. The pupils in the studios of the great French painters were not taught how to paint, so much as how to analyze. I met Collins on his return from his long apprenticeship in Paris, and I sat at his feet for many years, listening to the true doctrine; — and yet it is only by chance, and a day or two ago, that I happened to recollect the very first impression I got from him. It was this: — "Why didn't they teach him painting in Paris?" I should have thought a man would come back from abroad knowing his trade. But the truth is that in about 1840 the whole world forgot the trade of portraiture. To know what that trade once was like one must look at the portraits of for instance,—Harding, or of any second or third rate French or English painter of the mid-century,— of some man who earned his livelihood by supplying the market with portraits. The man has a style and a recipe. He is not very ambitious as to method; he does not experiment; he paints.

But the newer painters sought the higher branches, and lost the A B C. A great critical world-influence, which began in the

eighteenth century, was drawing to a focus and strangling art in Paris at the very moment when ignorant, enthusiastic young America arrived there. Young America came away with a mouthful of ashes. We arrived just as the feast was over. We needed the rudiments and we received the leavings. We needed milk and porridge, and we received a cup of black coffee and a cigarette.

Collins had a chiseled brow, a straight nose and blazing eye and was extraordinarily handsome before he became heavy. At the age of twenty-eight, however, when I first knew him, he had a chin and a frame more suitable to a man of forty than of thirty. He was of very powerful build, he knew how to box, punch the bag and wrestle, and he loved feats of strength in the studio. He was a bon vivant, and would make a preliminary study for a feast, as a painter makes a sketch for a picture. He had the subtlety of an animal in understanding character, and he observed delicate traits like a criminologist. He was always bursting with enthusiasm and gave of himself. He had so much personal force and conversational power that to his admirers he became a deity,—to those who disliked

him, an egotistical doctrinaire. His superabundant physical energy became a source of weakness,— as happens with many people, who pass through youth without being forced to learn the art of resting. He reminded one always of the statue of the wrestler, and was prepared to solve all questions by wrestling.

Collins felt he was destined to rediscover painting. He was to recover the practices of the great masters of Italy and Holland, and to justify them by the science of the nineteenth century.

That all good art was based on scientific truth, he never doubted. He had the wholehearted belief in psychology, which tinged the minds of young men of promise in his day. All the new sciences were to bring us nearer to all the old arts. Collins would spend a month of study over some effect of light in Rembrandt, or in seeking the secret of a Rubens drapery. He felt that neither accident nor ethical intention was behind great painting, but only an understanding of the laws of vision. Ruskin and the sentimental writers were poison to him. He thought that all merit was the result of technical excellence, and he regarded the moral feelings which art arouses in the lay-

man as most dangerous guides to the study of painting.

He read books upon the eye and upon refractions of light; he experimented with colored objects. He often approached the subject from the standpoint of a physicist; but he was too much of an artist, and his interests were too metaphysical for him long to remain a physicist.

In his late years he told me that he had started out with a belief in realism. He had staked his all upon this. He had clutched realism, and held it with might and main in his clenched fist,— till at last he began gradually to open his hand, and there was nothing in it: realism had vanished under inspection. Another of his early enthusiasms was for high lights. He would place a hard featured old lady under a tremendous blaze of light, and paint her till the values hurt your eyes and hurt your feelings. If you should suggest that the world would never put up with anything so ugly, he would smile with commiseration, or else roar with anger. He was on the path towards Leonardo. He cared nothing about the old lady, or her family or her well-wishers, or about the critics and contemporary mousers in the drawing-room. The

picture was a mere experiment, a reaction, a page in a notebook.

If Collins had a defect, it was a lack of humility. He couldn't bear to think, and he wouldn't stop to imagine that perhaps he might be altogether on the wrong track about something. He never discovered the unconscious. To him art was something that could be found out. The unity of light was a calculated, predetermined thing. Sentiment was a danger, temperament was a danger, all must be science. So far as technical skill went, he always drew like a master, and could at times, paint like a master. But his search for perfection ruined his power to finish. He had no trade sense, no sense of the "good enough," no conscience as to his duty to provide something or other that would pass muster. He sought the absolute, and would work for six months at a portrait and then abandon it, because he could not find a cue which any half hour's inspiration might bring.

His main thesis, and I must say that it profoundly affected me at the time he expounded it and has influenced all my beliefs ever since,— was that beauty must not be sought as an end in itself: beauty was a result. You must seek truth. For

instance, in writing or in speaking, you must always try to give *the idea* with accuracy. If you pursue this course, a certain grace will arise out of your success in giving the thought. But you must not try to be graceful; or you will become affected. He disliked artists who consciously adopted any style. Style should be merely the result of doing one's best with the problem. If a thing were perfectly painted, it would have no style. Style is error,— just as personality is error. Nevertheless, the more you avoid the personal, the more will the note of personal conviction be in your work. By neglecting style you attain to style. In all these matters Collins was dealing with the most profound metaphysical truths.

He was always interested in abstract thought; and I cannot but believe that people's influence is in proportion to their power of abstract thinking; or at least that some very strong wave of force goes out from anyone who is excited by abstract ideas. Collins' ambition was abstract. He wanted to redeliver to mankind the Promethean art of painting; and he suffered as much as if he had already done this, and were being punished by Zeus for it. He had the ob-

stinate pride, the incorruptibility of a being who should propose to be the *first man,*— the one unbought spirit in the universe.

Under different conditions of education and surroundings the vast force that was in Collins would have issued in pictures. But in spite of his impassioned study and his ceaseless experiments, he never perfected his vehicle, nor did he ever quite know what he wanted to say. There was impediment in his thought. He saw much and thought much — perhaps he saw and thought too much. For some reason, hidden in the very bosom of his age and of his country, his mind was prone to produce the philosopher's, rather than the painter's solution of a problem. His talk would connect itself easily with the metaphysical discussions of all ages; but, so far as painting went, the tradition was broken; there was a link gone between his work and the old work.

Thoughts like these would flit through my mind as I watched him paint and wished I knew enough of the art to understand his procedure. Painting itself is a sequent and consistent symbolism, that goes back to the beginning of time. Any new branch of it is deeply connected with the old roots; and those souls to whom painting is a natural

language have ideas that can be expressed only in the terms of that art. When I heard this brilliant creature talk, I used to think that if he could say it all in paint, he would be as great as Velasquez. But he had set himself a task that could be accomplished only in a sympathetic age.

Collins' method of painting gave the intellect more than it could do. He supposed that he must both see and translate upon the instant: the values of the sitter must be transformed into art then and there. To Collins every picture was a new problem, as great as the whole of mathematics. Now the great painters have not painted in this way. They have dished out a spoonful of beaten-up eggs, ready for the fire, added a pinch of parsley, and served hot. Each one of them had a personal language of his own, which he had worked out during his whole lifetime, and which answered his needs. Collins, on the other hand, was always seeking.

And yet here too we face a sort of strange paradox; for in being the thing he was, Collins broke barriers and blazed paths which required just this kind of a man. Society through its opposition compelled this form of explosion.

I am convinced that in some essential way he was on the right track. The art of the world is a game of hide and seek. It blossoms, it springs up in nooks and corners, it dies away, it reappears. Some men search and find it not; others find and value it not. This causeless, impersonal, fanning of the spirit into flame, which leaves a picture or a sonnet behind it has something to do with the technique of craft; but philosophy has never been able to discover where craft ends and genius begins. The great artist, during the great epoch, pursues his work, dies and leaves the matter a mystery,— over which the artists, amateurs and thinkers of later times grope, probe and experiment.

A renaissance almost always begins in an attempt to recover lost arts. New art grows out of old art, as a graft on an old stock. The forms, to be sure, change under the hand of the master. Orpheus takes up Pan's pipes, and they are transformed into an organ under his touch.

There was some sort of buzzing gadfly of destiny behind Collins that awakened many other persons besides myself to a conception of what painting is. He taught us that painting was filled with a force like the sun, that it was intelligent, articulated,

freighted with indestructible meaning, and was one of the things of greatest consequence in the world. I could not myself read these beliefs in Collins' paintings; but the effect that his work and even fragments of it, often had upon painters made me see that somehow the beliefs must be expressed there for those who could read.

THE END

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